Week ending July 13 1957 *Every Wednesday Fourpence*

JOHN BULL

THE GREATEST CHINDIT STORY OF ALL BEGINS THIS WEEK

I refused to die

by IAN MacHORTON

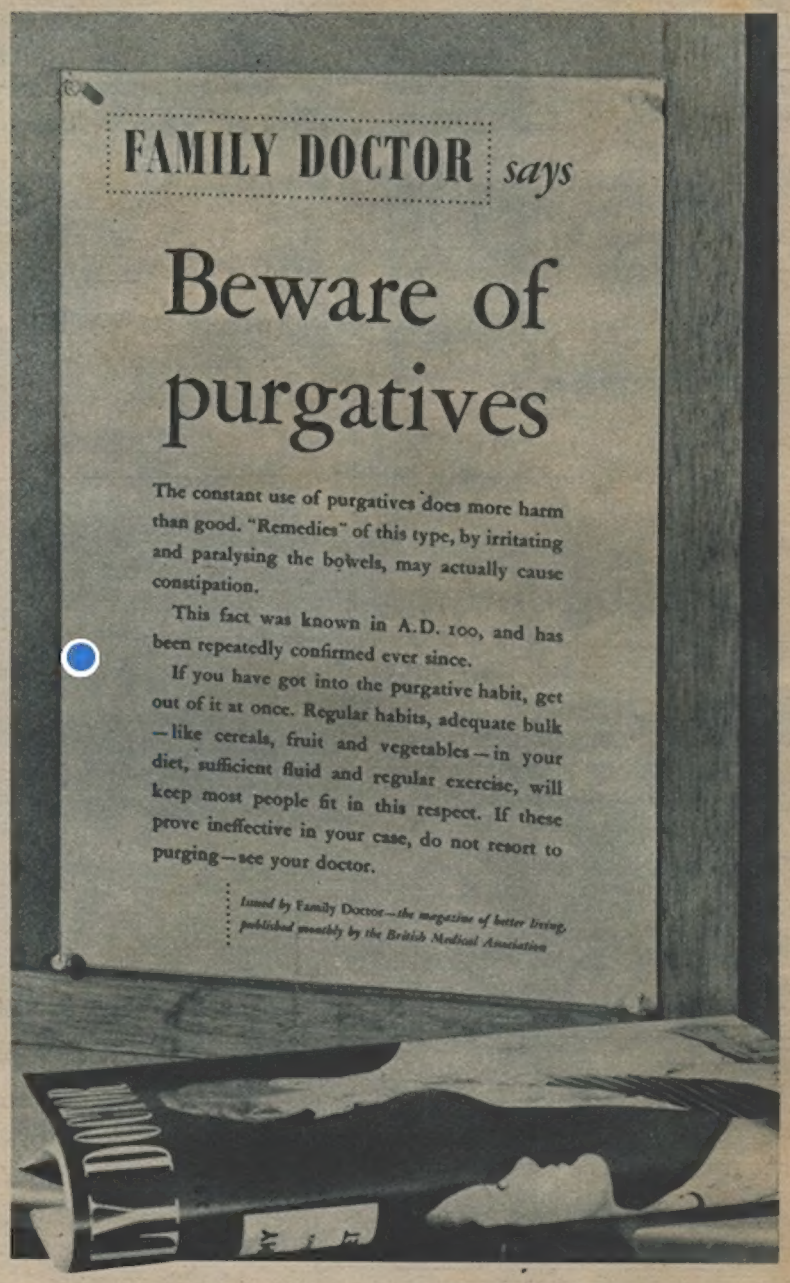
Another intriguing RAFFLES adventure

A NEW PATTERN FOR OUR HEALTH

If you ever *suffer from constipation . . .*

THIS POSTER CONCERNS YOU

Take note of an important medical magazine's warning against the purgative habit. Then read below how to follow their advice to get "adequate bulk in your diet" and end constipation the natural way.


FAMILY DOCTOR says
Beware of purgatives
The constant use of purgatives does more harm than good. "Remedies" of this type, by irritating and paralysing the bowels, may actually cause constipation.
This fact was known in A.D. 100, and has been repeatedly confirmed ever since.
If you have got into the purgative habit, get out of it at once. Regular habits, adequate bulk —like cereals, fruit and vegetables—in your diet, sufficient fluid and regular exercise, will keep most people fit in this respect. If these prove ineffective in your case, do not resort to purging—see your doctor.
Issued by Family Doctor—the magazine of better living, published monthly by the British Medical Association
FAMILY DOCTOR

IS dosing the right answer to constipation? In modern medical opinion we should all be a great deal better off if we tackled this distressing complaint through a simple change in our habits and our diet. The thing to remember is that it is not so much what we eat that brings on constipation as what we don't eat enough of.

How constipation occurs

Today, very few of us take enough exercise. Most of us have sit-down jobs. The meals we eat are often just snacks, hurriedly eaten. We live, in fact, unnatural lives—and we eat too little natural, unrefined food to keep our systems working normally. In particular, our food lacks badly those fibrous elements or "bulk" that bowel muscles depend on if they are to maintain healthy and regular elimination.

In the diagram you see the intestinal tubing through which all you eat

1 Esophagus. 2 Stomach. 3 Small intestine. 4. Large intestine (a) Ascending colon (b) Transverse colon (c) Descending colon. 5 To rectum.

passes. Nutritive values are absorbed into the bloodstream, and what the body does not need is left behind.

Our modern diets, being soft and starchy, leave too little solid waste in the intestines. The residue is too small and slippery for the bowel muscles to grip on and draw away.

Missing their exercise, these muscles relax and stop work. They do nothing to shift the small slippery residue of food waste in the intestines. It is when these several little deposits build up that a large-scale blockage occurs and constipation results.

What action do you take?

Everybody knows the distressing effects of constipation. The feeling of uselessness, a muddy complexion, headaches, even the more serious pains in the back and stomach. Constipation cannot be ignored. It must be relieved. But this doesn't mean purging. As the "Family Doctor" poster warns, purgatives merely aggravate the condition. This is because they get their effect by *irritating* the bowel, without allowing it to clear the trouble in its own natural way. The muscles quickly revert to inactivity—and respond less and less readily to the promptings of the purge.

What "Family Doctor" suggests is that "adequate bulk" in your diet, sufficient fluid and regular exercise are the only safe, complete answer. There is a very simple (and very delicious) way to take this wise advice about "adequate bulk"—a daily helping of a crisp, tasty breakfast food, Kellogg's All-Bran.

Where will you see this poster?

In the interests of public health, this poster has been issued to hospitals and clinics up and down the country by "Family Doctor," the magazine of better living, published monthly by the British Medical Association. If you wish to take its wise advice, read how you can end constipation *naturally*, in the article alongside.

Make this simple, pleasant 10-DAY TEST *now*

Not a drug, not a medicine, All-Bran is almost 100% natural bulk. Passing through your system, it acts exactly like a soft sponge—prompting lazy bowel muscles to expel the waste deposits gently and safely. Even the most stubborn case of constipation will respond to its irresistible persuasion. Buy a packet, and eat All-Bran daily for 10 mornings. If at the end of that period you have not experienced the benefit of simple regularity, Kellogg's will gladly refund double your money.

Kellogg's All-Bran is made from the nutritious outer layers of wheat, with sugar, salt, and malt flavouring. All grocers stock it. Once it has restored regularity, All-Bran can bring lifelong freedom from constipation for less than 1d. a day.

JOHN BULL

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REPORT FROM THE EDITOR

Ian MacHorton ended the war alive—but only just

A YOUNG second lieutenant, newly commissioned and anxious for action, was kicking his heels in an Indian Army depôt at Quetta when a call came for volunteers for an "advanced training course." Second Lieutenant Ian MacHorton, of the Eighth Gurkha Rifles, volunteered. "When we knew the truth," he says, "we were given one chance to back out—and then set off on the most fantastic mission of our lives."

With 2,500 officers and men—Orde Wingate's Chindit force—MacHorton went to the railhead Dimapur. From there the group walked 160 miles to the front, and went on beyond it, wrecking Jap communications, blowing up supplies, harassing the enemy wherever they could. Of one column of 318 men only ninety-five came out alive; a few were taken prisoner. MacHorton's story of his astonishing survival begins on page 7.

MacHorton finished the Burma campaign blinded, deafened, and riddled with seventeen bullet and mortar wounds. From a casualty clearing station at Imphal he sent a cable to a girl friend in Britain: ALIVE WILL YOU MARRY ME—IAN. The girl is now his wife and the mother of a son and daughter. MacHorton's sight and hearing have returned; now, aged thirty-four, he is in Cambridge Military Hospital, Aldershot, having the last steel splinters removed from his body before he starts a new life—as a writer, public relations consultant and home-loving civilian.

ONE day shortly after the war, a tall, fair-haired English girl who was working in Athens lost her way. She approached a soldier whom she assumed to be a Scotsman—"because of his great height and fierce moustache"—and asked him the way to the bus terminal. But the soldier spoke neither Scots nor English: he was Private Katsamangos, of the Greek Army. The fair-haired English girl soon became Mrs. Katsamangos; now she is also Kate Mango, author of *A Dream Of Fair Women*, which begins on page 10.

During their courting days, Kate Mango saw the simple life of the country. But she soon found that life could be too simple. "Our first home was in a mud hut on the outskirts of Athens."

Today they live comfortably in South London, where Mr. Katsamangos runs a small restaurant. "I began by being head cook and bottle washer," says Kate Mango. "But one day the staff walked out, the urn blew up, and ruin stared us in the face. I realized then that we shouldn't have too many eggs in our one basket." She settled down at once to writing. With two young sons to look after she finds life busy enough. But occasionally she and her husband take time off to discover new places just as they did in their courting days in Greece. "Last week we were walking hand in hand again—along the Thames embankment."

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Free Speech

- **Why women are more practical than men**
- **Bird song that heralds the rain**
- **Can't we have cheaper music?**

My husband spent £12 on a flamethrower to kill the weeds at the end of our garden. It did the job in ten minutes but has stayed unused in the shed ever since.

When our baby was due he spent £30 on a ciné-camera to record its progress. And one day last week he decided that he must have an electric sander before he could repaint the hall. I could have rubbed it all down with glasspaper and pumice in the time he spent poring over the tool catalogues.

Men's hobbies and their craze for mechanical aids mask an inherent laziness and a childish preoccupation with toys. It's we practical-minded women who improvise and get things done without wanting to spend on new gadgets every time.—Mrs. P. H., Manchester.

Bedding It Out

Joan Hill, of Lincolnshire, wishes she had a garden so that she could burn her unwanted mattress ("Free Speech," June 22). But old mattresses or pillows do the garden a world of good if they are dug in when the soil is turned over. The flock retains moisture during long, dry spells. —T. Hughes, Methil, Fifeshire.

Wrong About Face

People with grim, rather aloof facial expressions don't realize just how lucky they are. They don't get asked directions by strangers many times a day, and I'm sure they don't get asked to hold babies, look after shopping bags or mind seats on buses.

But men emerge from crowds just to ask me for a match, and I am a real bait for confidence tricksters. Certain types of faces seem to attract strangers in difficulties—and only people like me who own such a face know how inconvenient it can be.—E. H., Nechells, Birmingham, 7.

Thrown Off Course

Property owners who keep people off unfenced land may annoy J. Brazel, of North Shields ("Free Speech," June 8) but one property owner who

occasionally orders a trespasser off unfenced land with far-reaching consequences is the Jockey Club.

A person who offends against the rules of racing can be warned off Newmarket Heath and prosecuted for trespass if he ventures on to the Jockey Club grounds or racecourse. In practice it also means that he is not allowed on any racecourse in Britain or in other countries where the racing authorities have agreements with the Jockey Club.—F. Wood, London, S.W.17.

Steps To Fear?

As I climb the creaky wooden stairs to bed each night, I always wonder how much longer it will be before houses are built with fireproof staircases. Many lives must have been lost because wooden staircases had gone dry and rotten with age.—Mrs. Hilda Jones, Acrefair, Wrexham, Denbighshire.

"Wooden staircases are cheap, so they are likely to be with us in homes for many years," says the Fire Protection Association. "Plastering beneath them helps to retard flames, but as closed doors can usually be depended upon to keep a fire at bay until help arrives, Mrs. Jones should shut all her doors and only inch open her window if the smoke becomes unbearable."

Singing Prophets

I was interested to read the letters about animals which foretell the weather ("Free Speech," June 8). When I was young my father, a

farmer, taught me to listen to bird songs at this time of the year.

If the blackbird sits half-way up the tree, using the spreading branches as an umbrella, and sings: "Bare feet, bare feet, bare feet . . ." it is going to rain and rain. And if a thrush perched at the top of a tree calls a cheerful "Borrow, borrow, borrow . . ." and its mate sings back: "Nobody lend, nobody lend, nobody lend . . ." a fine spell of weather is due. — Mrs. F. Holden, Cowling Lane, Leyland, Lancashire.

Round And Round

Harry Hopkins says that 125,000 gallons of water are required to generate electricity from one ton of coal ("Danger Mark For Britain's Water," John Bull, June 1). But more than 120,000 gallons of these are sea or river water used for cooling only and returned whence they came. This can't be counted as part of Britain's water consumption.

About 1,500 gallons of fresh water are turned into steam for every ton of coal burned, but after use this steam is condensed back to water and used over and over again. The loss from this system is about two per cent, or thirty gallons.—G. Adey, Burry Port, Carmarthenshire.

Record Expenses

Why do long-playing gramophone records cost so much when they are surely no more expensive to make than the old 78 r.p.m. type? Music enthusiasts have to pay £100 or more for even a small collection of well-known music. And because of this, lesser known composers and performers don't get the appreciation that they deserve.

If the prices of long-players were reduced they would sell faster, the clumsy and uneconomical short-play records would become obsolete quicker, and although many people would have to buy new gramophones it seems to me that both the public and the record companies would gain financially in the end. — Nicholas Britain, Eton College, Windsor.

"No more classical music is being recorded on 78 r.p.m. records anyway," say the record companies. "It costs as much in performers' fees and time to put a given amount of music on to one long-play record as it does on to five or six of the older twelve-inch type; and because of the higher quality of reproduction it is a more delicate and expensive process. Higher profits from popular music enable us to offset the cost of issuing rarer pieces which sell at a loss."

Formative Years

Noel Hampton's complaint that children don't get the same chances in infant schools ("Free Speech," June 15) reminds me of my efforts to enter my son, who was eight in November, at a preparatory school where the starting age was eight.

The headmaster shook his head and said: "We like our boys to be born in September, so that there is no disparity in the age of each form." He reluctantly agreed to take my son as he was only two months out and I pointed out that there was nothing that I could do about it then.—Mrs. L. V., London, S.W.19.

John Bull pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech," and at the usual rates for photographs. Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to the John Bull Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post

THE COVER

The train now standing at platform four . . . will not reach its destination before an inch or two has been added to a certain gourmet's waistline. Young passengers on the adjacent train, however, are advised to take their seats immediately and gaze in the opposite direction. Because, says cover artist Zelinski, even in this age of miracles no child will remain unmoved at the sight of a spoon digging into so delectable a dish. It'll be bad enough listening to the chant of the wheels of the train all the way home: *strawbrisncream, strawbrisncream.*

For higher *smileage*...

High-aromatic National Benzole puts new zest into your car. There's more life in every drop, more power in every pint, more drive in every gallon. Get more pleasure from your motoring—fill up for higher smileage!

Go NATIONAL BENZOLE

HIGH AROMATIC MIXTURES

Choose a career for this carefree lady . . .

The stage? the Services? champion driver? author? pilot? business woman? Right you are, every time! Yes . . .

Yes . . . it *is* Sheila Van Damm. Learns to drive in the Waaf: graduates to international rallies: *twice* Ladies' European Champion: publishes her life-story: holds a pilot's 'A' licence: co-direct's London's non-stoppest revue—six shows a day at the Windmill. Pause for breath.

If we drop in for a chat at her home or the theatre, she'll welcome us (provided she isn't driving) with a glass of Martini. Real Martini . . . just by itself . . . straight out of a real Martini bottle. Which seems to prove she's a connoisseur as well. What do *you* say, Miss Van Damm?

Better drink

MARTINI

Sweet or Dry

Beginning the greatest Chindit story of all . . . the drama of a wounded man's lone fight for survival in the Jap-infested jungles of Burma

I refused to die

by IAN MacHORTON

ON the vastness of the Burmese jungle I awoke abruptly. Some noise my brain had not yet assessed warned me of danger close at hand. It was the hour before dawn. Nothing stirred. The world was poised in ominous silence. Then it came again. The sound. It was quite different from any jungle noise—the grumble of a distant motor.

I was alone on a hillside, wounded after Japs had pounced on our column of Chindits. Forgetting that the slightest movement meant agony, I pulled myself to where I could look down on the road, directly below me, and reached for my tommy gun.

The noise grew louder, approaching from the right, the direction of Mong Mit. The driver could be heard changing gear to negotiate a steep slope. Then suddenly a truck swept into view and pulled up below my hiding place. Ten Jap soldiers were in it. I had only to squeeze the trigger. . . .

To this day, the picture of those Japs, sitting stiff and

My leg was shattered, and I knew that I must stay behind. The colonel's eyes showed pity. "You'll have a good chance if you surrender unarmed"

ILLUSTRATION BY RICHARDS

erect, remains imprinted on my mind. I remember how the hunter within me overcame the hunted so that, with cold precision, I judged the range. I remember lowering the snout of my gun to aim at their guts rather than at their heads.

This was the moment for which I, Second Lieutenant Ian MacHorton, serving with the 3rd Battalion, 2nd King Edward VII's Own Gurkha Rifles, had been so rigorously trained. This was why I had marched into Burma. Now was my chance to kill.

Eight weeks previously, when we had begun our expedition deep into Japanese-held territory, the enemy were regarded as supermen. It had become obvious that the morale of Allied troops in the Far East was not high. The Japs had to be debunked.

Thus the year 1943—less than six months after the British defeat in Burma—opened with an offensive planned down the coast of north-west Burma to Akyab, and another, in the north-east, to be carried out by Chinese divisions and a small American force.

It had been intended that the Chindits, a unit created by Brigadier Orde Wingate, would co-operate with the advancing Chinese and surprise the Japs by suddenly appearing right across their lines of communication in the jungle. The plan had all the boldness of Wingate at his most unorthodox. But something had gone wrong. While the British side of the campaign was nearing completion, it became clear that the move by the Chinese would not take place. They showed no eagerness to engage the Japs.

So General Wavell decided to send in Wingate's force alone.

We Chindits comprised three battalions of infantry numbering 2,500 men. These were split into seven columns, each a major's command consisting of eight officers, about three hundred other ranks, and fifty mules and horses.

I was in No. 2 Column. With No. 1 Column we were the decoys. Looking back, I fail to see how we took on so lightheartedly the task of inviting the cock-a-hoop Japanese to attack us. Put it down, perhaps, to the magic of Wingate and the trust he inspired in men.

I was nineteen when we set out from Jhansi, a training camp in the Indian jungle. My column leader was Major Arthur Emmett, who had been a tea planter in Assam before the war. He put me in charge of the Support Platoon—a command concerning which I knew next to nothing, having rather skipped the subject at the officers' school.

However, I discovered my Gurkha troops to be as friendly and helpful as they were obviously brave and tough. My second-in-command, Platoon Havildar Lalbahadur Thapa, signified that he would be delighted to teach the new "Officer Sahib."

After crossing the Chindwin River our column separated from No. 1 Column and headed east in "column snake"—single file—for Kyaikthin. We marched through enemy country towards our target: the distant Myitkyina—Rangoon railway.

There followed three weeks of hell, clawing through a green inferno. The jungle was of closely packed bamboo rising twenty or thirty feet and merging into creepers and foliage overhead. For days we hacked forward laboriously, always bathed in sweat.

Lice in our clothes tormented us. In rivers, leeches fastened to our legs and arms, sapping our strength.

One night we reached a railway line on the far side of the Mu River and marched along it. I wriggled my shoulders to ease the weight of my pack. Although none of us spoke, the column could not move without noise. The crunch of boots and hooves betrayed our progress. We halted several times while guides searched the jungle on each side for a track to lead us behind cover.

THEN suddenly it happened—the ambush. As the guides hunted for the elusive track and the column waited, there came the noise of a bang up at the front, somewhere beyond my vision. Just one metallic bang.

Swiftly, gunfire surrounded me. I heard the high-pitched rattle of a Jap machine-gun. Ahead, a voice cried: "Take cover!" Another screamed: "Christ Almighty!"—and was silenced.

I swung my tommy gun to the ready in one movement. Nelly, my mule, reared up before me, spun round, crashed over and slid down the embankment to lie at the bottom. My fright, which for an instant had rooted me to the spot, vanished before the urge for self-preservation. I dived after her.

All was turmoil in the column. Mules lay dead. Others reared and kicked. A mortally wounded soldier cried out shrilly.

A Bren gun opened up beside me. Its sound was shattering. Bullets ricocheted off the metal rails above my head.

"Fix bayonets!" I shouted.

I looked over the top of the embankment just as Jap soldiers charged out of the jungle thirty yards away. *"Banzai! Banzai!"*—the Jap war cry—they screamed.

My right hand closed over a grenade which hung from my webbing. I lobbed it forward and saw it drop and explode among the Japs.

I sighted my gun on the chest of a Jap officer not fifteen yards from me, and squeezed the trigger. But there was no recoil at my shoulder. I squeezed the trigger again. Still nothing happened.

But the Jap fell dying, hit by another gun. His men withered and vanished.

I wiped sweat from my eyes with the back of my hand. Hearing a chuckle at my right, I turned to find Kulbahadur, my Gurkha orderly, grinning broadly.

"Sahib," he whispered, "the book of instruction says that the Thompson machine-carbine must first have its action cocked before it is fired. . . ."

As quickly as it had erupted, the battle subsided. The moon crept behind a bank of cloud. And everything was very dark.

In the silence which followed I tried to assess what size of force had ambushed us. On both sides of the embankment there had been rifles, light and heavy machine-guns. I estimated—quite accurately—that our column had been engaged by a Japanese battalion of about eight hundred men.

And now what? Kulbahadur, I knew, was by my right, but who, in addition to a Gurkha rifleman whom I could see, was on my left?

"Make contact with the next man," I ordered him.

The Gurkha continued to stare at the jungle ahead of him. Impatiently, I repeated my order, and when he still took no notice I stretched out a hand and pushed his shoulder.

He rolled over and, amid an avalanche of stones, slithered to the foot of the embankment. He lay there, his eyes staring at the sky and his blood congealing on the grass.

The fight was not yet over. *"Japun Ayo!"* rang out the warning shout of a Gurkha. *"Japun Ayo!"*

Shadowy, panting figures were almost upon us. I could see their domed helmets. They were

For weeks, MacHorton (third from the left) and

After an ambush Arthur Best collected identity discs from dead comrades. He was mistaken for a Jap and nearly shot

Major George Dunlop grew a red beard while in command of a Chindit column. When the column rested, the Japs struck. MacHorton was wounded

the Chindits marched into Burma. When the tracks ended they hacked a path through virgin jungle

When Premsingh (left) was wounded the Chindits had to leave him in the jungle. Kulbahadur was MacHorton's orderly—and once saved his life

Nips all right—creeping up in rubber-soled jungle boots.

This time I remembered to cock my gun. In a few minutes it was over. We, the victors, stood erect. The dead lay at our feet.

Stepping forth from the carnage, I saw a form writhing and moaning. Lying face downwards was Naik Premsingh Gurung. With two other Gurkhas I looked for his wound. It was not hard to find. His right thigh bone had been smashed by a bullet fired at such close range that the smell of burned flesh hung in the air.

Carefully we lifted Premsingh and carried him to the top of a hillock. There Platoon Havildar Lalbahadur gave him a shot of morphia while a field dressing was applied to his wound and bamboo splints were tied to his shattered leg. Premsingh's eyes showed his thanks as we made him as comfortable as possible among the undergrowth.

The rest of us—my group of survivors totalled thirteen Gurkhas—tried to get some sleep. . . .

I AWOKE with a start at a touch on my shoulder. Kulbahadur had roused me because it was the hour of "stand-to"—the hour before dawn when jungle fighters on both sides are awake, watching and waiting.

We spent that hour with fingers on triggers. Were we the only survivors of the whole column? Was I the only officer left? And were these Gurkhas my sole command?

The silence and solitude increased. "The others must have gone away," said Kulbahadur.

I decided that the enemy must be pursuing larger groups of the scattered column. It had been planned that the column would split into groups in the event of meeting heavy opposition. These would rendezvous in the hills which formed the western watershed of the Irrawaddy.

My course was clear. I would lead my little party to the rendezvous and join up with the rest of the survivors. I stood to call the others to their feet, feeling good to be on the move again.

Then I remembered the problem of Premsingh. I knew what I had to do, but with someone as close as he had become in recent weeks it was going to be hard. I ran my eyes over his wounded leg and then, with a feeling of guilt, let them come to rest on his face. I found that he was gazing at me steadfastly. His eyes searched mine for a hint of the decision he knew must be inevitable.

Premsingh knew as well as did I, and every other Chindit on that expedition, that unless a man could walk unaided he had to be left in order not to jeopardize the lives of his companions. It was a risk each of us had taken knowingly. Now it had happened to Premsingh.

I knelt beside him, placed my hand on his arm and squeezed it hard. My feelings could not be expressed in words. The heart of his friend was full of yearning to save him, to get him back to the British lines and to the hospital treatment which would mean his salvation. But the heart of his commanding officer, which was one and the same, was too keenly aware of duty.

By now the rest were adjusting their packs, ready to leave. They sensed the tenseness of the situation, but rightly turned their backs on it.

I stood up. "Carry Naik Premsingh over to the railway," I ordered.

"Sahib, no! May I remain here?"

I decided that maybe Premsingh was right. It was shadier beneath the trees. He had a commanding view and would be able to attract any passing Burmese who might turn out to be friendly. They might hide him in a village until he was strong enough to escape through the jungle. Any chance of survival was preferable to capture by the Nippon army. "Prisoner of the Japanese" was normally synonymous with "presumed dead."

"Just as you like, Premsingh," I said.

He held out his tommy gun for Kulbahadur. "Give your rifle to me," he said. "You have

Continued on page 31

Orde Wingate created the Chindits, and gave to guerrilla tactics a spectacular twist. He was killed flying defiantly through a thunderstorm

A dream of fair women

by ***KATE MANGO***

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE DITTON

Oh, the excitement of Athens . . . where the girls are as bright as film stars—or simply like Poppi

You had only to look at Kostas to know that he was a *modernos*: clean-shaven, and with his shirt hanging down outside the top of his worn grey flannels. When dressed for an evening out he slicked down his hair, put on a jacket and wore a flamboyant tie.

The young men of the village spent their evenings at the *taverna*. At rickety iron tables under the vines they sat for hours over glasses of resinated wine or metal mugs of weak beer. They argued about politics. Now and then they rose to dance alone, in the way of their country; arms outstretched, fingers snapping, bending and bowing, kicking in time to the broken rhythms of their folk music.

Sometimes, when a man had drunk a little too much, he would sit back and launch into one of the long, fierce ballads of the lonely heroes of four hundred years of foreign occupation.

Kostas had no patience with those young men. Their politics bored him. Their talk about wives and children, crops and drought, was dull and uninteresting. The music they loved lacked snap and go; *he* wanted to jive. And what was the good of their everlasting dwelling on the past? Greece had got to wake up and look to the future.

Not that he cared; he was off to America as soon as he found the chance.

True, for six nights of the week he might join them, argue as loud as the rest, sometimes dance when the rhythms called irresistibly. But he did so with the bored air of a man out of place, or with a little self-conscious smirk, making the others feel he thought he was wasting his time with them.

They made fun of him, but he didn't mind. His real life was not lived in the village.

The week's work and leisure alike were only a gap of time to be borne until Saturday night. Then, his day's work done, he would hurry back home, rush through his meal, wash at the water-butt in the flagged courtyard, comb through his hair and dash out of the house, either to catch the one bus, or, if he were lucky, to beg a lift from a lorry going into Athens.

His goal was the cinema. Even when he could not afford to go inside, still it drew him. He would wander up and down the brightly-lit streets, from one picture-house to the next, staring at posters and stills, and ending up as one of the idlers around Platia Omonia: the hundreds like himself for whom the neon lights there spelled life. There he lounged, gazing hungrily at the great smooth American cars carrying women gowned and painted as Kostas had seen them only on the cinema screen.

The cinema . . . that was reality. He only really lived on those nights when he could pass the magic barrier of the cash desk into the cool inner darkness where beauty and romance flowered upon the screen, and where voices languished and barked in the language that Kostas used to lace his everyday Greek.

Okay . . . tough guy . . . sure thing . . . you've had it . . . say, baby. . . . He knew the meanings of the phrases, if not always of the separate words. Sometimes, despairing of ever being able to reach his dreamland, he would repeat to himself all those he knew, as others recite a litany.

Recently, he had done this often. Times were not good, and work was uncertain. For some weeks he had not been inside a cinema. But now at last he was setting off again, a hard-earned hundred drachmae note tucked into his jacket pocket.

In Athens Kostas was less noticeable than in the village. He was swallowed up by the crowds when he got off the bus at the terminus. Only his tie—had anyone paused to notice it—might have given him a certain distinction, it was so plainly the brightest in the whole city.

It was partly in order to give the nonchalant world the chance to note and admire it that he lingered amid the noise and bustle of Platia Omonia while trying to make up his mind which programme to see. Rosemary Lawson was on at the Pallas and Doranne Linter at Kotopoulis.

Kostas stood on the large paved island in the centre of the square. Men, women and children hurried past. The flower sellers continued indifferently to shut down their booths. He did not lift his eyes to the Lycabettous, the steep conical hill towering up from the heart of the city, crowned by its little white church above the pines, nor see where the last light of day retreated from behind the Parthenon, outlined above Athenas Street.

The small voice by his side made him

Which should it be? Rosemary or Doranne? Angles or curves? Drama or musical? Life was really too hard, which asked of a man such decisions.

"*Signomen. . . .*"

The small voice seemed to come up out of the ground by his side. It made him start, reaching him through the noises of the streets and his own abstraction. He turned and looked down into the clear, wholesome face of a country girl: a face which he vaguely recognized

start. He turned and looked down into the clear, wholesome face of a country girl. He could see that her large eyes were filled with tears

although for the moment he could not put a name to it.

Calliope (called Poppi, like thousands of girls of the name) was small and slender. Her young figure defeated the shapeless ankle-length dress and drab shawl, as her delicate face shone out from the unbecoming peasant head-dress: the tightly swathed scarf with ends knotted behind which hid all her hair, framing her face like that of a nun. Her large grey eyes, beneath finely marked brows, were filled with tears.

SEEING this, Kostas noticed that her lashes were fair, unusual in this land of dark beauty. He gave a quick glance at the face-framing scarf, from beneath which not a wisp of hair could be seen.

"Oh, hallo. It's you," he said moodily.

Though of recent years he had seen little of Poppi, who lived in a neighbouring village, they had as small children attended the same little school. Yes, he remembered now. She had been fair. They had teased her about it, been cruel, as children are to anyone different from the rest.

"Yes," whispered Poppi.

To see a known face in the nightmare of roaring traffic and bewildering lights had been like a miracle. It was probably the gracious Saint Barbara, protectress of women, who had set Kostas here in her path at her time of most need.

"I've been so afraid." She pressed together her trembling hands and looked up at him pleadingly. Kostas stared down at her, frowning. The thought of her hidden fairness intrigued him now, giving her womanly mystery.

"How do you come to be here at this time?" he asked, wholly Greek in that moment, Greek of the hills, the *modernos* forgotten.

"My aunt at Piraeus was ill. My mother sent me to nurse her. I've been there a fortnight. Today her married daughter came back from the clinic with her new baby. There wasn't really room for me any more, nor any more need, so I started back home."

Kostas's eyes lifted a moment from her face and were caught anew by the beckoning lights of the cinema across the square.

"You should have started earlier," he said abstractedly, and took a step forward.

Poppi remained still, only pressing together again those small hands already worn with years of hard work in house and fields. As she bowed her head a single golden curl of hair fell forward from under the scarf.

"I know. But the house needed cleaning, and my cousin was tired, and the baby was fretful, and the meal had to be made ready for the men when they came back from work. I know I left it too late, but my uncle did tell me how to get

Another great novel by DAVID WALKER

Twenty-seven greenhouse panes with his new catapult—and the bad grand music of the glass each time . . . It was the red daftness of Sandy McBain, the Pipe Major's son, landing him in trouble again. But there was worse to come . . .

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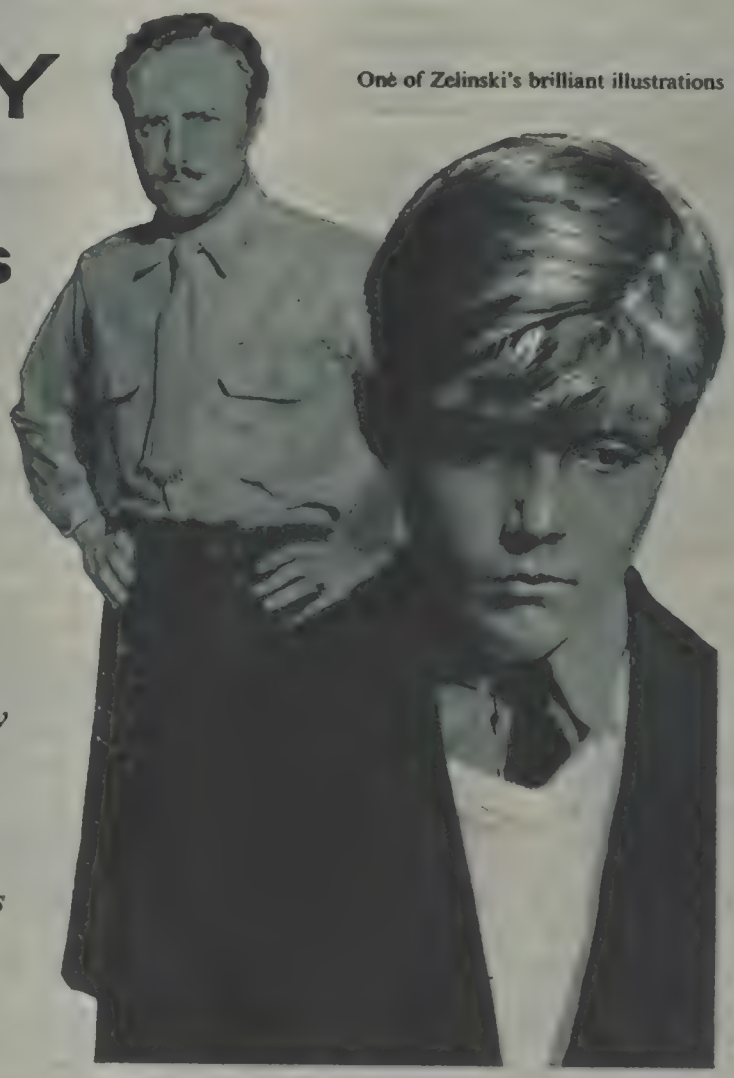
IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK



One of Zelinski's brilliant illustrations

across Athens from where the Piraeus bus stops to where our bus starts. But I seem to have gone the wrong way."

He turned back towards her. The bright city lighting played on the gentle face, the fine-drawn pale brows above downcast eyes, and that single lock which promised a glory of gold no man should see but he who one night would loose the wedding veil from about it.

"And now you are lost." He spoke like a man in a dream.

"Please just tell me the way. I'll find it."

She knew his divided attention and sensed the unrest within him. Perhaps he was waiting for someone, perhaps for a girl. He couldn't know how often she'd watched for him about the village. And why should he care, if he did?

Kostas looked round the square. The neon lights beckoned. The bright faces and luscious curls of the film stars, many times larger than life, loomed and beckoned. He felt he must follow their lure, must give in at last to the longing to fondle and kiss them in fantasy, warm in the kindly darkness—Rosemary or Doranne, which ever proved stronger.

Or Poppi.

The bus terminus was only five minutes away: a pleasant walk, with orange trees scenting the air in the shadowy glades of the Constantine Park, where a girl might be persuaded to walk and talk and perhaps kiss a little before the last bus must be caught. . . .

"I'll take you home," he said slowly.

Now he had said it. He was committed. Goodbye for another week to romance and adventure. Why must he have met this girl, drab-robed in grey, just as he stood at the gateway to splendid experience?

"No, please," said Poppi, the words hardly audible amid the hum of traffic and of the loitering crowds. Oh, the excitement and bustle of Athens, with girls on every corner, who, if not film stars, were far and away more *modern* than Poppi.

Her distress made him insistent. He had, after all, four sisters of his own, all very like her. "Of course I will," he said firmly. "It's not right for a young girl like you to be wandering the streets of Athens at night."

"You're sure you don't mind? Oh, you are good."

With a thanksgiving prayer to Saint Barbara, Poppi fell into step beside him as he marched through the crowds and out of the square.

On their way Kostas kept a dignified, manly silence, while Poppi nervously chattered about the small things of her daily life, and now and then thanked him again. Though she would walk miles alone through her native hills, night or day, there was something terrifying about the city. When she'd found she was lost, she'd been really afraid and couldn't think what to do. Seeing her look about, at a loss, a man had spoken to her, and another had followed her all 'round the square. She hadn't dared speak to one of those frightening city police spick and span in field-grey. But when she saw *him*, why, it was like seeing St. Michael himself, or St. George, and having a sudden safe feeling.

Slowly a glow of comfort for the loss of the great wide screen and all the great shadow world he so loved stole upon Kostas. Then came a feeling of shame for that other thought which had been in his mind, of the kisses that might be exchanged in the Constantine Park.

This girl's face, innocent of all but spring water, and her bright hair, were real as the women of the films could never be for him. Her soft mouth was not to be pressed among the sparse grass of the hillside, but only when at the solemn betrothal the gold wedding rings were consecrated and for the first time placed on her hand and her man's.

Old-fashioned stuff. Not modern. Not cinema. Yet the way his fathers had wooed and wed and bred children to work their strips of mountain land under the skies of Attica. . . .

"Here's the bus waiting," he said abruptly.

They climbed in and settled themselves in a seat just behind the driver's. Above the windscreen a tiny light-bulb glowed beneath a small ikon of the All-Holy One.

The bus crew were standing in the roadway, just come from the *taverna* nearby. They wouldn't be moving off for ten minutes yet, there was plenty of time. So they joked with an old islander in baggy breeches and small square cap, who carried an openwork basket full of live chickens.

The last light faded out of the west and sudden darkness came down. Kostas took one of Poppi's hands into his own. She looked up from under the long, fair lashes, and smiled. The golden lock of hair was hidden again; but he was happy to think of it, tucked away, happy to know that so small a thing could change the course of two lives. He did not speak, but turned over in his mind this hope for the future which was still so new that he could not yet quite get used to it. . . .

A small lime-washed cottage set into the slope of a hillside. Against its bright walls a morning-glory which daily opened fresh indigo trumpets to the kiss of the sun. A small yard, about which chickens clucked and a young turkey strutted, while children laughed and scurried about on their young, strong legs. A wife, their mother, whose beauty was theirs as theirs was his strength, and whose golden hair no man should see but himself.

Where was the fool who would give up these things to chase shadows . . . ?

At last he spoke. "It's hot in here," he said. Poppi smiled up at him.

Still laughing and joking, the driver and conductor climbed into the bus, the old islander close behind. There was a last-minute scramble of passengers. Then the bell rang and the engine trembled into noisy life.

As they rattled out of the square, someone began to sing. Without releasing Poppi's hand, Kostas loosened the garish tie from about his neck. He stuffed it into his pocket. THE END

The family doctor is being brought up to date. Both he and his patients are promised greater comfort and better care in...

A new pattern for our health

by' HARRY HOPKINS

Dr. Stephen Taylor made a nation-wide survey of general practices. It provided many ideas for Harlow's health centres

The drab, old-fashioned surgery waiting-room is unknown at Harlow. Here you wait in a bright and cheerful lounge, gay with plants and colour

THE four brass plates in a row beside the door were the only obvious concession to tradition. From the pavements outside the Stow neighbourhood health centre, a long, wide canopy led up to glass swing doors. Inside, one found oneself in a spacious lounge, made cheerful with orange curtains, contemporary chairs and tables in small groups, plants and flowers. The ceiling was light blue. There were pictures on the walls.

The pictures were full of small detail—chosen in the hope that the patients would scrutinize them while waiting and thus have their minds taken for a moment off their ailments.

For this was the Nuffield House health centre, one of six planned—three are already working—to bring New Model doctoring within pram-pushing distance of every family in Harlow New Town. Harlow, Essex, has indeed the distinction of being the only town in Britain where the shining ideal of a comprehensive National Health Service based on health centres is now almost a reality.

The long, wide entrance canopy was lined on both sides with the prams that it was designed to shelter. For Tuesday afternoon at Nuffield House—the Stow neighbourhood health centre—is infant welfare afternoon. Inside, the sliding wooden partition cut off the clinic space from the general waiting lounge.

Harlow's young mothers sat in a circle, offering their babies for the health visitor's scales. A woman doctor, one of the four G.P.s working at the centre, was at hand for consultation in a small room at the end.

Mrs. Heather Howells gathered up Francis, aged five weeks, and, taking in tow Janet, now nearing five, and Alan, three, fiercely clutching his teddy-bear, prepared to leave for their house in Quarry Springs—"five minutes' walk by myself, ten with the children." The two younger children were born at Harlow. Janet

Each doctor in the health centres has a "come in" sign. When he is ready for his next patient the sign buzzes and lights up

was born in the Old World—at Cricklewood, London, where their father, William Howells, had a job as a foreman milk roundsman.

Thus well placed to compare the old and new model doctoring, Mrs. Howells doesn't hesitate. She's for the Harlow way every time.

She said: "If I come in—as I did not long ago, with a sore throat—and see that a lot of patients are waiting to see my doctor, I can go instead to one of his colleagues."

At Cricklewood—as all over Britain under the system which grew up between the wars—antenatal and other maternity and welfare clinics are run by local authority doctors. "Sometimes," said Mrs. Howells, "there were even students present and, though I suppose they have to learn, well, it isn't very pleasant."

But at the Harlow centres the antenatal and other clinics are taken by the centres' G.P.s in turn. Mrs. Howells is thus able to stay throughout under her own doctor.

The artificial division of patients between the public health doctor and his clinics and the general practitioner and his surgery is often nonsensical.

"It means," explained one Harlow doctor, "that often a woman's own doctor is the last to hear about her pregnancy. Yet it is he who must look after her at the birth. If there should be complications, he is not familiar with the history—the clinic doctor dealt with that."

At Harlow, the preventive and treatment sides of medicine, so long estranged, are being brought together again. Having a hand in almost everything except school medical work, the general practitioners are able to build up a more complete picture of their patients.

The Nuffield Trust, which financed the Harlow experiment, announced: "It is hoped that Harlow may in due course provide an example to the country and perhaps to the world of a completely integrated health service—a pattern for the future in a town of the future."

The health centres have dental surgeries with modern equipment. Doctors and dentists consult on the spot

Tuesday afternoon is the infant welfare necessary, a woman doctor, one of four

THE design of the Harlow centres—the two larger ones cost £24,000 each—was worked out in consultations between the architects and the practitioners, dentists and public health doctors who would use them. They had at their disposal the results of a nation-wide survey of good general practices, conducted over eighteen months by Dr. Stephen Taylor, Visiting Research Fellow of the Nuffield Provincial Hospitals Trust and a member of the Harlow Development Corporation.

No detail was too small for consideration. In particular, emphasis was laid on keeping the place reasonably small and compact, preserving a friendly, homely air. The doctors find that their patients like coming to the centre.

Once inside the front doors, patients turn right to report at the reception office, where Miss Kelk, the doctors' secretary, aided by an assistant, presides over the records.

There is no confusion, no overflowing queue. With plenty of space, says Miss Kelk, "people don't have to slap their children down." Low bookcases, crowned with plants, divide the lounge into three bays. Near each, a little above eye-level, hangs a well-designed sign: "NEXT PATIENT PLEASE FOR DR. ———."

The doctors' suites, too, have been carefully designed to provide all that is needed without extravagance. The positions of each doctor's desk and examination couch were taken into account by the architects. A cheerful carpet and a picture again—the doctor's personal choice. Windows of a carefully calculated size, for, explain the doctors, "a consulting room is a confessional; as Sir Thomas More observed in his *Utopia*, too much light dries up the mind and drives out thought."

For accommodation and services, the doctors each pay around £250 a year. Owing to the large income tax allowances that become possible when a doctor's surgery is in his house, this health centre way, they say, works out more costly than working from home in the traditional manner.

"But now," said a Harlow practitioner thankfully, "my home really is my home. And—since we work a rota system—I have a reasonable chance of getting some peace in it."

In her little room just off the waiting lounge at Nuffield House and at the end of the doctors' corridor, District Nurse Mary Boothroyd bandages a small boy's scalded leg. She is able to undertake many routine dressings and injections of penicillin which would otherwise distract the doctors. A sterilizer bubbles. An operating lamp hangs from the ceiling. The room is available to the doctors for minor operations which might otherwise have to be sent to hospital.

In her former district in the West Riding, says Nurse Boothroyd, much of the work she can now do under ideal conditions in her room in the centre had to be done, under difficulties, in patients' homes. She would sometimes have to spend hours trying to locate the doctors—or puzzling over cryptic notes that they pushed under her door. Now she is in easy daily contact with the practitioners. They just take three steps down the corridor to discuss cases with her, letting her see the relevant reports. She is thus free to organize her rounds.

Nuffield House and the other two centres have in effect become the focal points of a large working partnership of all those concerned with Harlow's health.

In many towns, general practitioners and public health doctors have been virtually at daggers drawn. The G.P.s have tended to regard the public health man as an interfering bureaucrat; the public health doctor has found the G.P.s elusive and unco-operative. In Harlow these traditional antipathies are being shattered.

The Essex County Council health visitors work in and from the health centres. "In Barking, where I worked before," said Miss Barbara Scudamore, "it was two and a half years before I so much as met a general practitioner. But here, of course, we're working with them all the time. The co-operation is terrific. . . . And someone is here all day, so that Harlow people always know where they can get medical help."

If, on entering the glass doors at Nuffield House, one turns to the left instead of to the right, one finds oneself confronting the reception office for the dental wing. Here are two dentists' surgeries, with, at the end of the building, a dental laboratory for the technicians. A spare surgery in a corner of the building handles X-rays, emergency treatments and gas sessions. There is a "recovery room" next door and—once again the evidence of careful planning—a back exit so that "gas" patients can leave without having to pass through the waiting-room, intimidating others still waiting their turn.

Again, health control "integration" soon showed its value.

"A patient," said one of the centre's dentists, "may come in here complaining of toothache. But the seat of the trouble is not always where the pain is. I may find, perhaps, that it lies in his ears. Well, it's now just a moment's work to pass him over to the doctors.

"In the same way, a doctor may get someone complaining of swellings and thinking that they are a sign of mumps. But the doctor finds that the teeth are the trouble. So he comes across and has a word with me about it. . . ."

Now, at Harlow, the principle of integrating the health services is being carried a stage further. A little over a year ago, the Harlow Industrial Health Service was started, with two centres planned, one for each of the town's industrial estates. Once again, under a part-time director, the service is being manned by Harlow general practitioners. Each of the eight local doctors involved has a round of factories which he visits at regular intervals.

"Conditions and tensions at work," said one of the G.P.s, "are at the root of some of the ailments we're asked to cure. But it's hard for the ordinary G.P.—stuck at his surgery desk—to get much idea of them. Now we go into the factories and we see for ourselves. For instance, I visit a foundry every week. It's hot, it's noisy. . . . If a patient comes to me and tells me he works there, I have a better picture to start from."

An engineering employer was enthusiastic. "You know, a lot of chaps will never go to see a doctor until they're carried there on a stretcher. Now the doctor comes in here every fortnight, walks around, chats with the men. He gets their confidence—and he's good at sorting out the

session at Harlow. Mothers bring their children to see the health visitor and, if G.P.s at the health centre. The doctors find that their patients like coming there

There is also a health service for Harlow's factory estates. At the special industrial health centre, injured workers can be X-rayed

trivial complaints from the more serious ones without giving offence."

Self-financing, this service costs the employer £2 a man a year. But this employer considered it a cheap form of insurance since costly machinery, made idle for a few days by a man's illness, could quickly lose him hundreds of pounds. And, on the national level, many times more production is lost by illness than by strikes.

On the eastern industrial estate, the first of the Harlow industrial health centres, Edinburgh House, is already at work. It has a surgery staffed by three nursing sisters, an X-ray room, apparatus for resuscitation from gassing or electric shock. A consultant dermatologist visits the centre. And every morning Sister Pamela Braund or Sister Beryl French sets out in the Industrial Health Service station wagon on a routine round of factory first-aid rooms. Accidents which would have meant sending workers to hospital can thus often be dealt with quickly, on the spot.

Even more important on the long view may be the Industrial Health Service's preventive work. Modern industry is for ever taking up new materials, new processes, which if not expertly watched may create new ailments to swell the G.P.s' surgeries. The service, under its director, Dr. Stephen Taylor, has conducted investigations into the use of trichorethylene, now widely used as a degreasing agent for metals before, perhaps, painting. If not used with rigid safeguards, this substance gives off a toxic gas which can cause casualties. It has investigated the growing use of epoxi resins which, without proper precautions, can cause a large crop of skin troubles; and of selenium, an element used in the electrical industry. At the request of one firm, it has reported on health dangers involved in certain levels of noise and the measures that can be taken to avoid them.

But in planning this new model integrated health service, this medical paradise, the Harlow doctors had one inestimable advantage. They started with a completely free slate. They built up the medical services and centres with the houses and the town.

"It's immensely stimulating, working in a health centre like this," said one doctor. "One can always discuss cases with one's colleagues, pool one's experience."

The Harlow practitioners in each of the three centres so far are in partnership. The normal state of general practice is individualistic competition. And this, it seems, must be an obstacle not only to the general co-operation that health centres at their best imply, but to the bringing into being of health centres at all.

In the autumn of 1952 the vast, much-heralded Woodberry Down Health Centre was opened in North London, the first of 162 planned by the London County Council. On the ground floor, surrounded by scores of clinics dealing with everything from corns to wayward children, were six well-appointed general practitioner suites. But these, alas! were empty. It was eight months before they could be filled. Out of sixty doctors within a one-mile radius, all duly circularized, only seven could be induced to apply to enter the centre.

FOR, on present methods of payment per head of patients, the G.P. is a business man as well as a doctor. His surgery is his pitch—and it may be a valuable one. He is thus extremely reluctant to leave it—lest some other doctor should come in and filch his patients. In fact, all but two of the six Woodberry Down doctors merely used their suites there as branch surgeries, still keeping on the old places which, they say, the majority of patients prefer. One doctor still maintains his old surgery, though it is only three hundred yards from the centre.

For them, the fine suites at Woodberry Down are thus apt to appear merely as extra expense —£350 a year. They explain that they had no option but to move in because otherwise six new doctors—serious competition!—might have been imported from outside the area.

It is obvious that as long as such calculations of business interest rule the situation, the extension of Harlow's integrated health service to the nation at large is going to be a somewhat slow process.

Nevertheless, faced by a growing demand for higher standards of medical care and by the spread of scientific medicine, the old-time, supremely individualistic G.P. is being slowly compelled to change his outlook. There is a trend towards group practice—in which three or four doctors get together in partnership to run what may sometimes, in effect, be a small private health centre. Doctors from all over England have been down to Harlow to see how it is done, and then gone back home to try something of the sort themselves. The Ministry of Health administers a fund from which the doctors can get interest-free loans for projects in the building or adaptation of group practice centres.

Again a movement is on foot to modernize and brighten the dreary, old, overcrowded surgeries traditional in industrial districts, bringing them a little more into line at last with the new standard of living in postwar Britain. A B.M.A.-sponsored survey revealed that a tenth of practices were unsatisfactory; one-twentieth of the surgeries contained no examination couches —the patients were in fact never examined— and even, sometimes, no water. Shaken by such revelations, local medical committees all over Britain have conducted an inspection of the surgeries in their areas—and the defaulters have been instructed to put things right.

Today, nine years after the National Health Service came into being, there are still only about a dozen health centres in the whole of Britain. But experiments are going on; rethinking is in progress. While there are not likely to be any more centres like the L.C.C.'s large and costly Woodberry Down—whose very size is a little intimidating—there are a good many possible variations on the health centre theme.

At Nottingham, the authorities have created a health centre out of four ordinary terrace houses. At Corby, Northamptonshire, the Nuffield Trust has backed another type of centre, the diagnostic centre. Here the doctors work from their own surgeries, and use the centre for X-rays, physiotherapy treatment and pathology laboratory tests. Consultants visit the centre, which thus becomes a sort of halfway house between the G.P.'s surgery and the hospital, reducing out-patient queues and enlarging the scope of the general practitioners.

Meanwhile, at Harlow, the foundations of yet another health centre are laid. And if Harlow's new design for health can hardly be swiftly applied to less fortunate parts of Britain, at least it has lessons for the future. Perhaps the greatest of them—as Mrs. Howells and the other health centre clients will tell you—is to keep the human scale. Science is no substitute for humanity and even the decrepit horsehair sofas of an overcrowded waiting-room can be preferable to institutional white tiles. THE END

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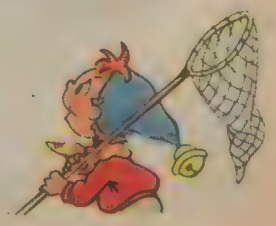

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THE UNFORGIVEN

by ***ALAN LE MAY***

ILLUSTRATED BY LAURENT

Never again would anyone call Rachel an Indian squaw. For now she had fought like a true Zachary

INDIANS were all round the homestead. Andy and Rachel knew they were there, out of sight, waiting for the night; waiting, too, for Cash Zachary to ride into the trap. . . .

The Kiowas had besieged the Zachary homestead for hours. They hoped to capture Rachel, a seventeen-year-old girl they believed was of Kiowa blood. She had been adopted by the Zacharys as a baby.

Rachel and her two foster-brothers, Cash and Andy Zachary, and Georgia Rawlins—a neighbour who had ridden over to treat widowed Matthilda Zachary, now lying seriously ill—had fought the Indians off the previous night.

The siege lifted with daylight. Cash left to see Georgia back to her home eighteen miles away. Andy and Rachel expected him back at any moment. How could they warn him that the Indians had returned?

Though their powder stock was dwindling, they decided to fire off a few shots every few minutes. That way he would not blunder straight into an ambuscade. . . .

The afternoon wore on. Once they heard firing in the distance, but it died away. Rachel thought of Ben, the oldest Zachary brother—the one she loved in a different way from the others.

Ben had been away several days on ranch business. Surely he was one day nearer home tonight than he had been when this sun came up? But she did not mention this to Andy.

Instead she said: "Cash is all right. He'll come home. He *must* come home. So he will. . . ."

FINAL INSTALMENT

Battle In The Gully

CASH lay in the bottom of a dry gully, resting and trying to save what strength remained to him. His left leg was broken below the knee, so badly that a spike of bone was sticking out of it. He had bound it as tightly as he could with strips of his shirt, yet it was all he could do to drag it as he crawled, and he had crawled a long way.

The leg had been smashed by his horse as it crumpled in front and over-ended, destroyed by a bullet-broken shoulder.

Before his horse had been shot under him, he had got an arrow in the back, shot from in front of him as he charged, trying to close with his enemies. He had been lying low on the neck, and the arrow's trajectory had carried it deep along the length of a back muscle.

He had got rid of the shaft, finally, by an effort that almost knocked him out. But the sheet-iron head, a slender three-inch cone of metal, had come off the shaft, and stayed. It was still lodged in his back, somewhere down near his belt.

Cash believed he had killed four savages. One he had got in the first brush, when they had discovered him and circled in on him. The second he had got from behind his fallen horse, with the last shot in his carbine.

After that he had taken to the gully, trying to outwit the warriors by an interminable, crippled crawling. The wound in his back was bleeding fast, and he could find no way to stanch it. He left a blood trail every yard of the way.

He had been able to make use of that. When the Kiowas came into the gully after him, he managed to be some distance from where they expected him, so that they followed his blood trail along the bottom of the gully. And now he used a trick that wounded bears used. Beyond a twist in the gully he climbed out on to the bank and back-trailed a little. He had kept

He grabbed for the door bar, but Rachel got there first and threw her weight on it. "Andy—no, no, no—don't you dare leave me here. . ."

the empty carbine, sometimes using it as a crutch, but it wasn't much good to him, so he dropped it in the bottom of the gully for bait.

Waiting on the lip of the gully, just over the carbine, he had killed the first savage who bent to pick it up, shooting him through the head with the Dragoon revolver. Four or five others who were trailing him got the hell out of there, and he wounded one as they got away.

The last one he got with almost the same trick, but with an extra hitch to it. The Kiowas circled, to come safely at the place where he had lain in ambush, but he wasn't there when they got to it. As soon as the gully was clear, he had rolled off the edge, half killing himself in the fall, and once more started crawling. At a turn of the gully he climbed out of it again, but this time he did not watch his back trail.

The Kiowas halted, well clear of the place where his blood trail disappeared round the corner. They spotted the bit of buckbrush in which he was hiding on the lip and knew he was waiting there. They left the gully and circled to a safe distance ahead; then they back-trailed themselves, to close from behind him.

Only they were wrong about the way he was facing. Once more he had thought one step ahead of them, and he killed another Kiowa who crept upon him from the supposedly safe direction.

He missed, though, with every shot, as he fired at those who retreated. The Dragoon was empty. He rolled himself into the gully again, and lay there. He was weak now, and when he tried to drag himself forward he made only a few inches.

One more. Just one more.

He concentrated everything he had in an effort of the mind so great that much of his pain was blanked off. He rolled until he was tight against the side of the gully, belly down, but face turned outward. He drew his Bowie knife from its sheath, though even this was a struggle, and gripped it underneath his body. Then he waited, counting his own heartbeats. He had to be alive and conscious when they got there.

They came in time. He knew they were there before he saw them. He waited with slitted eyes, unwinking, and at last they appeared around him. Another arrow in the back, first, then another. He lay limp, but was still breathing.

Suddenly he was grabbed by the hair, and a knife sliced his scalp. He whirled, got the scalper by the wrist and snatched him downwards. The Bowie knife stuck upwards and went home to the guard in the belly of the Indian. Then he disappeared under a mass of as many as could reach him, hacking and stabbing. . . .

When a quarter of an hour had passed without further sound of riflery, Rachel opened the bedroom door, lest Matthilda regain consciousness and call too faintly to be heard. She seemed asleep, her eyes closed, her breathing again so quiet that she seemed hardly to breathe at all.

A small breeze was beginning to move out of the north-west as the sun lowered, and, though it didn't amount to much, what there was of it was working against them. That mild and pleasant little stir of air would have been welcome and enjoyed on any other summer evening, but tonight they blamed it for keeping any further news from coming to them across the prairie miles. Raw-nerved, they felt that every act of nature was wickedly opposing them.

In the absence of any further indications, she and Andy judged they had better make ready to last out the night without help. They set about bracing each other by turning their minds to the practical things they could do. Their ammunition had better be tallied, about the first thing.

The repeaters, to begin with. The faster of their two magazine carbines was the Spencer, which loaded with a seven-ball tube. Its magazine, with three extra tubes, accounted for twenty-eight rounds, and the Henry was carrying six. But, when they had emptied every pocket, and scraped out the corners of the ammunition chest, they found only nineteen loose cartridges more. Every single round would have to be held back for the desperate moments of close action; and even then the rim-fires must be hoarded with all care, or the magazine carbines would be out of action in the first three minutes.

There was nothing they could do about it. They could cast bullets and make caps, but they didn't know how to refill the detonation rings of the rim-fires. The close-shooting Sharp and Hankins would have been deadly in sniping action; it might have hurt the enemy more than any other weapon they had. But it was a slow-loading single-shot, and used the same rim-fires as the repeaters, so it had to be put away.

For slow fire they were left with only two cap-and-ball pieces. They found only seven rounds for the breech-loading Sharp's Fifty. Its linen cartridges were slow and finicky to make, but maybe they would have to try. The .69 buffalo gun was muzzle-loaded with loose powder, but search brought to light only one more of the huge slugs it fired, besides the one with which it was charged.

All this was bad enough, but it was their two cap-and-ball revolvers that worried Andy most. The big Walker Colt was loaded in its six chambers, but had a reserve of only four more .44 balls, and Andy's treasured near-Whitney had the six loaded in its cylinders, and that was all. The revolvers were their final recourse if the Kiowa swarmed in, and Andy meant the Whitney for Rachel, because it was lighter and bucked less than the heavy Walker.

"We've got to make some—quick! Build up a fire. . . ." He rummaged frantically for the lead strips they melted down to fill the bullet mould.

There were no lead strips.

"The saddle shed—there's lashings of 'em down there in a——"

He grabbed for the door bar; but Rachel got there first and threw her weight on it. "Andy," she gasped. "No, no, no—don't you dare leave me here."

"It's our only chance to——"

"There's nothing down there. The door's stove in. Lead would be the first thing they took."

He knew it was true. The saddle-shed door, nothing but rawhide on a frame, was hanging by one strap, visible from the house.

Andy scratched up one idea more. He pulled a battered two-foot chest out from behind all the other plunder under his bunk. In the very bottom of this old toy box, where they had sifted by their weight, lay tumbled some dozens of lead soldiers. There had been whole regiments of them once, brightly painted, and tall as your finger—Andy's share of the loot Papa had brought home one time after selling a big herd.

"Here—here!" He shoved a clutch of them into Rachel's hands, and clawed for more. "Get the fire going. Where's the melt-ladle at?"

She packed all their lightwood splinters into a solid heap, threw on gunpowder, and set it burning. She had already blown the flame white with the bellows when Andy stacked the rest of his soldiers on the hearth.

"Get some bigger wood on, too—no, I'll do it. Gimme that." He took the bellows from her. "Get the thirty-six mould out. It's the one that makes eight at a whack."

As Rachel brought the long-jawed bullet mould to the hearth, the first drums started. A rattling noise began it, like the sound of two axe hafts pounding on a log. Then a pair of medicine drums took it up, and finally there was a flat loud clamour, made by beating on sheets of hardened rawhide.

The sound built and built, now and then ending with a final wallop like a cannon shot, to start over softly, and build again.

Andy glanced up at Rachel, but they didn't say anything about the drums. He skimmed the molten lead in his ladle. "Better take a look at Mama."

The red rays of sunset were striking through the high air-slits in the bedroom, filling the narrow space with a strange, ruddy light. Matthilda's face quivered and her eyes opened as Rachel stood looking down at her. For a moment she stared unseeing; then she knew Rachel, and her face twisted weakly as she burst into tears.

"Darling girl," she said, as if the words were wrung out of her, "darling, precious girl. I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry."

They never knew just what it was that Matthilda so regretted as she died. Maybe the last thought in her mind, as the light left it, was the simplest kind of an apology for being unable to care for them, or even herself, any more. Now the snoring gasps called the death

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Rachel stood in the shadows as she saw the trap door of the Glory Hole begin to rise slowly . . . slowly

Can you afford justice?

Staggering costs may result from going to law. Candles for the barrister and a bonus for solicitors can turn a winning case into a financial loss

by PETER MOSTYN

SOME weeks ago, a motorist friend of mine sued another driver in a county court, claiming £17 10s. for damage done to his car. A barrister appeared for him and, of course, he also employed a solicitor. He won his case, but the other driver had failed to notify his insurance company of the accident within the stipulated period, so it had washed its hands of the business. The defendant had very little money, and he persuaded the judge to let him pay the damages and costs by weekly instalments of 10s.

In spite of this, my friend's legal costs became payable immediately, and they came to considerably more than the damages he recovered. They totalled £25 13s. 6d., made up in this way:

Barrister's fees	£7 17s. 0d.
Court fees	£1 17s. 0d.
Witness's fees	£1 0s. 0d.
Solicitor's fees	£14 19s. 6d.

The barrister's fees included 10s. for his clerk, since by a long-standing tradition a litigant always has to pay a fee to the clerk of any barrister he employs. There is no logical reason for this practice, and it has been much criticized, but it continues. The fee was fixed in 1846, and it includes an allowance for supplying the barrister with candles. The solicitor's fees included such items as "Writing letter before action, 5s." (the pay-up-or-else letter); and "Writing to client to inform him of hearing, 5s."

Cases such as this explain why, apart from the never-ending travail of the divorce courts, some large commercial cases and the remorseless grind of the criminal courts, the law is experiencing a slump. In 1952, there were 169,544 High Court cases; in 1955, 155,268. The decline is even more striking in the county courts: in 1938, 1,292,744 cases; in 1955, 730,768. More cases are being settled out of court, and the reason can be summed up in one simple word: cost.

In a High Court case, the fees are different from those charged in county court actions. The total costs of both sides in such a case will nowadays be between £150 and £200 a day. Of this, £75 to £90 will be barristers' fees, and most of the rest will be solicitors' charges, largely made up of many small items. The fee for a solicitor's letter is 3s. 6d. (this was fixed in 1888), and he will write about thirty during a simple High Court case. He charges 3s. 4d. for each telephone call made, and 6s. 8d. for "attending counsel," which might mean handing counsel the brief. He will charge 6s. 8d. for reading the other side's pleading and a further 6s. 8d. if he finds it necessary to visit the other side's solicitors. When he accompanies his client to visit counsel in chambers, he puts 13s. 4d. on the bill, and at the end of it all he adds fifty per cent to the total, as a sort of cost of living bonus for solicitors.

The successful party nearly always has his costs paid by the loser, but he may still be out of pocket. How much of the winner's costs should be borne by the loser is decided by the Taxing Master, an official of the High Court.

Paradoxically, the greatest terror of the successful litigant who pays for his own case is the Legal Aid Act, even though a legal aid certificate is granted only after an applicant has established that he has a reasonable case.

Every year, thousands of people are sued by legally aided persons, and have to finance their own defence. Sometimes they fight long and expensive cases and win—and then find that they are saddled with a bill of hundreds of pounds for costs. For the State pays only the legally aided person's costs. It does not pay the costs of the unassisted other party, even though he may have won the case.

This provision of the Legal Aid Act has been widely attacked by judges and lawyers, but successive governments have remained adamant that the country cannot afford to broaden the scope of the Act.

So if a legally aided woman sues a shopkeeper for damages for an injury sustained when she slipped on the floor of his shop, it may well be cheaper for him to pay her £50 or £100 out of court, rather than fight an action and run the risk of having to pay his own lawyers a much larger sum—even if he wins.

If costs could be reduced, those who do not qualify for legal aid would have more chance of fighting back.

In 1953, a Royal Commission detailed changes in legal procedure, all designed to make going to law less expensive. Many of these recommendations have been put into effect, but they have not solved the problem.

One constructive move would be to abolish the antiquated division between solicitors and barristers and merge the two branches of the legal profession. At present, anyone who wishes to be represented in the High Court must employ not one lawyer but at least two. His solicitor cannot appear in court for him. He must brief a barrister. If it is a serious case, he may have to brief Queen's Counsel as well. And Queen's Counsel are expensive. Normally, the minimum fee is fifty or seventy-five guineas a day, plus the junior barrister's fee, which is always two-thirds of the senior's. This anachronistic ruling can lead to some staggering costs being incurred.

Recently a manufacturer was angry when some of his materials failed to arrive by the agreed date. He refused to accept the consignment when it did appear and told his solicitor to write to the suppliers claiming compensation for loss of profit. "They'll pay up," said the solicitor confidently.

But the suppliers put in a counter-claim. In the end, the case was settled, but only on the morning of the hearing, and on condition that both parties dropped their claims. In the meantime, both sides had had to brief barristers and Queen's Counsel. The cost to the manufacturer was £250.

THE END

A barrister entering the Law Courts. If a client has a conference with his counsel the charge is two guineas for half an hour

RAFFLES and the Husbands' Boat

by ***BARRY PEROWNE***

ILLUSTRATED BY EDWIN PHILLIPS

He wasn't exactly eligible for this trip. But then, neither was the attractive young lady who was so desperately seeking his help

THE pier clock was pointing to ten minutes past eight when A. J. Raffles and myself, Bunny Manders, strolled out after breakfast on to the terrace of our hotel. It was a perfect morning, the sky blue, the English Channel serene and sparkling.

"Looks like the start of a heat wave, Bunny," Raffles said. "Just old George Evett's luck that it couldn't have come in time to do him a bit of good."

Raffles felt strongly about George Evett. A grand old cricket pro on the eve of retirement, George was having his benefit season so ruined by fickle weather that his friends had arranged a special three-day match at this seaside resort in the hope of sweetening his fund a bit.

Among the prominent cricketers invited to turn out was A. J. Raffles, and I had come down with him to see the game. As luck would have it, throughout the first two days rain had poured down in torrents, while the third day, with the match reduced to a farce, had brought only a token attendance.

"Now look at it," Raffles said. "Perfect day! It's a crying shame, Bunny. Old George's fund won't amount to anywhere near enough to buy him into that little tavern his heart's set on. I wish we could kick in a decent contribution ourselves—anonymously."

"What a hope!" I said. "We've never been so stony." Lured by the sunshine, I added: "Plenty of time before our train back to London. Let's stroll over and take a look at the pier."

We clicked through the turnstiles, and for a while we had the pier virtually to ourselves. Then I noticed that Raffles was glancing over his shoulder towards the turnstiles. I followed his glance.

Coming through the turnstiles on to the pier were two girls in summery dresses. With their dainty parasols and bright, pretty hair—one girl blonde, the other brunette—they added an exhilarating touch to the seaside morning.

Just inside the turnstiles, both girls paused and looked back. They had the air of awaiting someone and, sure enough, next moment two young men came clicking through and joined them. Each of the men held a blue ticket, evidently just purchased at the pier entrance.

"This is simply wasting a day, Dilys," I heard one of the chaps protesting to the blonde girl. "Can't you girls take a joke? What Bill and I were saying at dinner last night was only teasing. We'd have much more fun if we all spent the day together. Why waste it by insisting Bill and I go off on this—this——"

"But surely it's just what you wanted, Steve," said Dilys. I saw a look of sparkling mischief pass between the girls. "All that talk last night—about the adventures men have to sacrifice when they marry. Why, Katie and I would just hate to feel that we kept you from all that kind of thing, and this opportunity today is specially *for* men who're restless with the wanderlust. Isn't it, Katie?"

"Of course it is," said Katie. "That's the whole idea. Anyway," she added, to the two men, "you've bought your tickets now, so there's no more to be said."

As they passed us and went on towards the pier-head, never had I seen two girls looking so demurely pleased with themselves, nor two chaps so glumly sheepish.

"I wonder what that conversation was all about?" Raffles said. "And, Bunny, look at all these people coming in through the turnstiles. Mostly men, you notice. And *only* men seem to have these blue tickets. What the devil's going on here? Let's join the throng and see."

We added ourselves to the highly assorted company of men trudging along the pier planking. Right at the end the single funnel of a paddle steamer breathed forth against the blue of sea and sky a transparent shimmer of heat. Over the gangway leading to the deck was stretched a banner with the legend:

THE HUSBANDS' BOAT

No women! No children! Husbands only! Blow away your holiday irritations. Return to your loved ones a giant refreshed. 7s. 6d. Day Trip. Four hours ashore in France. See the Casino! Sailing every Thursday.

THE HUSBANDS' BOAT

I stopped in my tracks. I laughed aloud. "You see, Raffles?" I said. "Those two chaps, Steve and Bill, were probably talking longingly about battling round the Horn in a windjammer, or crossing the Gobi Desert, or something—so those young wives of theirs pack them off on a day trip on the Husbands' Boat! Sheer feminine mischief. Could any voyage be more banal?"

"Oh, I don't know," said Raffles thoughtfully. "After all, notice what it says on the banner? 'See the Casino.' I suppose we've ten quid or so on us between us? Damme, if we were to strike lucky at roulette or *boule*, we could kick in handsomely to old George Evett's benefit fund. It's worth a flutter and we've nothing better to do. Look, you can get tickets from that steward at the foot of the gangway. Come on, old boy!"

I could hardly believe my ears. Already Raffles was steering me towards the foot of the gangway. I tried to hang back.

"Confound it," I protested. "Can't you grasp that we're not eligible for this trip? We aren't husbands."

"If asked," said Raffles, "we'll claim to be positive martyrs to matrimony. Come on, now—pull yourself together and try

The door opened wider . . . and I saw a sight strictly forbidden aboard the Husbands' Boat—the lissom figure of a young woman

to look like a family man." He took a sovereign from his pocket as we approached the steward. "Two, please."

The steward was a chunky, hard-faced fellow with red hair bunched up in burnished waves on top of his head. I half expected him to demand our credentials for participating in this tedious junket, but he only requested our names and, when Raffles gave them, noted them and gave us our blue tickets.

Yet I had an odd impression that the steward was looking after us with more than normal interest as we walked up the gangway and stepped on deck, a pair of impostors—two bachelors on the Husbands' Boat.

Shortly afterwards, the boat cast off. As the uproar of sailing diminished, and all about us the holiday husbands began to form themselves into convivial groups, I noticed Steve and Bill standing apart, looking morose. I fully sympathized with them.

"Par'n me, gentlemen," said a voice.

We looked round. It was the red-haired steward. "Could I fetch you gentlemen any refreshment?" he said.

"I was just thinking along those lines, steward," Raffles said. "Bunny, what d'you say—a whisky-and-soda?"

I nodded, and the steward said: "Very good, sir. By-the-by, there's a couple of nice seats over there, Mr. Raffles. Always a sunny corner, that, Mr. Manders. Lovely day for a trip."

The ingratiating smirk he gave us, and the slightly furtive glance which he cast up at the bridge as he went off, made me uneasy. As we crossed to the locker-seats, I drew Raffles's attention to the fact that the fellow seemed to have taken particular note of our names.

Raffles nodded, but made no comment and presently the steward reappeared bearing our drinks on a salver.

"Par'n the delay," he said. "Bit of a hugger-mugger down there in the bar. Some of the gentlemen make a moist passage of it. I can tell the ones that come with that in view, sir. Then again, I can tell the gentlemen—like yourselves, for instance—who come just because they're bored, and want the chance of a bit of sport."

"Sport, Steward?" Raffles said.

The steward glanced up sidelong at the bridge. "I was studying every gentlemen come on the ship," he confided. "I was looking for a couple who might be game for—well, there, I'll just say this. If you gents want a little adventure, go along presently to the foyer and kind of sidle along aft. You'll come to a few passenger cabins. They ain't in use. Knock on the door of Cabin Four—like this." He rapped in a peculiar way on his salver. "Say Arthur Crudd sent you."

He stepped back, clapping his salver under his arm. "Lunch served from eleven o'clock on, gentlemen," he said loudly.

We drained our glasses, then walked along to Cabin Four. Raffles listened for a moment, then rapped in the way indicated by the red-haired steward. I heard a sharp movement within the cabin. A crack of sunlight appeared at the door-edge, and Raffles offered the password.

"Arthur Crudd sent us," he said.

The door opened wider. Against sunshine streaming through the cabin porthole, I saw a sight strictly forbidden aboard the Husbands' Boat—the lissom figure of a young woman.

"Come in," she said. "Quickly, please!"

I STARED. Raffles's hand closed on my arm. He drew me inside and I looked incredulously at the cabin's occupant. Though well-dressed and, with dark, soft hair and blue eyes, attractive in herself, she was pale and seemed distressed.

"Thank you for coming here," she said, a little breathlessly. "I hardly dared hope—it seems dreadful to have to appeal to total strangers—but since you're passengers on this of all ships, I know that you're both married men, and that gives me confidence."

Raffles bowed slightly.

"My own husband, you see," she went on "is a Frenchman. I first met him when my father was captain of one of the regular cross-Channel steamers and I used to take trips with him sometimes, for the outing.

"I met Henri in the town for which we're now bound. Later, when he asked me to marry him, I had to tell him that, as my father was in poor health and was leaving the sea, I could only marry if Henri would agree to make his home with us—in the town from which we've just sailed. You see, there was nobody but me to look after my father—and he would never agree to live in France." She hesitated.

"Please speak quite freely," Raffles encouraged her.

"Well," she said, "Henri accepted my condition, but he never really liked it. He's very French. Our little girl, for instance—she's just two, now—Henri insisted she be given a French name: Germaine. And he wanted her to be brought up in France. He still owns a house over there, the Villa Gabriel, just outside the town where we shall be arriving presently.

"Well, there were arguments and quarrels between us. They grew more frequent. Yesterday Henri made the worst scene of all. But I never dreamed that he'd do *this* to me——"

"What," Raffles asked gently, "has he done?"

"He's gone!" she said. "When I woke up this morning, I found him gone. And he's stolen Germaine.

"I was frantic," the young woman went on. "I had no idea at what time in the night Henri had left. He has yachting friends. I felt sure he'd got one of them to take him over to France, and that he'd go first to his own house, the Villa Gabriel. But, of course, he'd guess that I'd follow him. He'd think that I'd take the regular steamer from Newhaven, and I knew he'd make sure to be gone from the villa, into hiding somewhere with Germaine, before I could arrive." She paused. "And then," she said, with a flash of triumph, "I thought of Crudd!"

"The steward?" Raffles said.

"Arthur Crudd," she said, "used to be a steward on my father's ship, and was devoted to him. I knew that Crudd was working now on this excursion steamer. I realized that, if I could get him to smuggle me aboard this ship, I could arrive much earlier than if I took the regular steamer, and I might be in time to catch Henri before he left the Villa Gabriel. Then, too, I felt sure that, all the passengers aboard being married and experienced men, Crudd could pick out at least two who would—would stand by me."

Her eyes sparkled as she looked from one to the other of us.

"To recover Germaine by process of law," she said, "might take months—years. If I'm in time to confront Henri at the Villa Gabriel, I intend to *appeal* to him to return Germaine to me. If he refuses—why, then, I want to have, waiting outside the house, two fellow-countrymen, two Englishmen willing to take the law into their own hands and, at my call, come in and just *take* Germaine for me."

I felt a rising excitement. I said at once: "Naturally, we'll help this lady, Raffles."

I was slightly puzzled by the look he gave me, but he said, as I expected: "We'll certainly do all we can, Bunny."

"The only thing is," said the young mother, when she had thanked us, "I mustn't be seen leaving this ship. Crudd will smuggle me ashore, all right, but it may involve a slight delay. What I'm hoping you gentlemen will do is go straight to the Villa Gabriel, on the Impasse Rocher, and scout round to see if there's a man there with a little girl and, if there is, keep watch and make sure they don't leave—until I come."

Waving aside her renewed thanks, we left her in the cabin and walked back along the alleyway.

We went into the dining-saloon.

"Raffles," I said, "what are our chances of recovering little Germaine?"

"Very poor, I'm afraid," said Raffles helping himself to cold ham.

"Poor?" I said. "But why?"

"Because I'm pretty certain," Raffles said, "that little Germaine doesn't exist.

"No, Bunny," Raffles went on. "That girl's story lacks plausibility. An ex-captain's daughter wouldn't need to be a stowaway. Probably the only word of truth in her tale is that she was smuggled aboard here by Crudd."

"But then," I said blankly, "what's their game?"

"It'd seem," said Raffles, "that they're anxious to hocus a couple of passengers from

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When the man came down flat on his face, Raffles set on him, ripping off his jacket

Farmer Richardson's cricket harvest

by PETER JACKSON

On his farm he sows the seeds of his career. On a Test match wicket he reaps the runs for England

Richardson is an aggressive opening batsman and a forceful county captain. At the Worcestershire club's dinner last year he declared: "It is nonsense to talk of winning the championship with this side." Left: the Richardson brothers, Peter (left), Bryan and Derek at home

One October afternoon in 1952, Peter Richardson, a young Worcestershire farmer, sat at the controls of a tractor trapped on a level crossing in the path of an express train. On a June morning, three and a half years later, the farmer became an England cricketer when he stood guard at Trent Bridge, Nottingham, and watched Ray Lindwall race towards him to deliver the first ball of the 1956 Test series with Australia.

"Lindwall was the more frightening prospect," says Richardson, the twenty-six year old left-hander, who is now established in succession to Sir Leonard Hutton as number one in England's batting order. "You can't jump out of the way of a fast bowler."

But he had been in no great hurry to jump out of the way of the express. Towing a trailer-load of sugar beet, the tractor sank into the bed of sleepers which provide a private railway crossing on the Richardson family's farm at Norton, outside Worcester. While he tried to accelerate free, Richardson sent a farmhand along the line to warn any approaching train. Before the man could reach a bend two hundred yards away, a passenger train came into sight.

At that moment the tractor stalled. Richardson worked methodically to restart the engine and tried a sequence of forward and reverse gear changes. When the machine still refused to move, he jumped from the driving seat and sprinted away from the track. A shower of sugar beet overtook him as the train crashed into the straddled tractor and trailer.

"That was a near thing," said the train driver, when he pulled up to find only slight damage to the front of his engine.

Richard looked at the trail of squashed beet along the line and said gravely: "I'm afraid this lot isn't going to be much good for lump sugar."

The stocky, fair-haired Richardson is just as stolidly cheerful about his cricket. It was a showery morning when he made that first Test appearance at Nottingham. Because of the intermittent rain he had to wait fifty minutes and walk to the wicket twice before he received the first ball. Then, with the score at only seven, he was almost run out.

"Enough to upset the most experienced player," says G. O. "Gubby" Allen, chairman of the England selectors. But Richardson was still batting at lunch, and playing so assuredly that Allen felt it necessary to caution the newcomer about running so many short singles in a Test match.

"Ah, but it was worth the risk to make those Aussie fielders swear," said Richardson. He went on to make two big scores in that match, and to finish the series with the best record for an England débutant since 1934. It followed a personally triumphant tour of Pakistan with the M.C.C. "A" team and was succeeded by second place in the batting averages for the South African Tests.

Yet Hutton described Richardson's batting as "lacking polish" and Gubby Allen has said that Richardson's play was technically below Test standard when he was first picked for England. "He was chosen," says Allen, "because of his relaxed temperament, quite remarkable in such a youngster."

Godfrey Evans, the Kent and England wicket-keeper, thinks that Richardson the farmer supplies the sturdy confidence of Richardson the cricketer. When Richardson, with his harvester's complexion, squared shoulders and loosely hanging arms, strode out to open an England innings last summer, Evans remarked: "He looks all set to walk on to the handles of a plough." Colin Cowdrey, who has often watched Richardson from the other end of a Test wicket, says that he leans over his bat as solidly as if it were a five-barred gate.

Where other players flourish their bats or finger their caps, Richardson adopts a more workmanlike mannerism before every ball. He wipes the

In his first Test against the Australians in 1956 Richardson (left) fell and was nearly run out. Then he scored eighty-one

On the ship to South Africa Richardson, as Liberace, won a fancy dress prize. Frank Tyson was "Brother George" and Harold Dalton, the masseur, took the part of "Mom"

perspiration from his hand across the seat of his trousers.

On the eve of his first overseas tour in 1955, Richardson was ploughing by floodlight until nearly midnight. He was up at dawn to finish work on the field. Then he hurried away to catch the ship to Pakistan.

"Ploughing a straight furrow," says Richardson, "develops the concentration for playing a straight bat."

He was ploughing for three hours after an early breakfast on May 4 last year. Then he drove to the county ground for some desk work as Worcestershire's joint secretary. The club job and his share in the family farm enable him to play cricket as an amateur.

At 11.30 a.m. Richardson, the county captain, was batting for his county in a desperate second innings against the Australian tourists. For the next three hours he gave the sort of exhibition which, says Cowdrey, "makes Richardson the best out-of-form player in the world." Groping against some very fast bowling, he was dropped twice before scoring sixteen, and later he was completely beaten four times in five balls. A similar spell unnerved Peter May, now England's captain, when he first met Lindwall in 1953. But, head down, Richardson pushed and prodded until, late in the afternoon, he was hitting the Australian attack to the boundary. After scoring the century which saved the game for his team and won him his Test place, Richardson went back to work on his farm.

Early in the South African tour, Richardson met a cricket enthusiast who wanted to discuss the Test series. Richardson changed the subject to stock-rearing. "I don't suppose you do much of that at home," said the South African. "Obviously, you don't know much about cattle," said Richardson, launching into a glowing description of the herd of Herefords on his farm back home. His companion, who remained politely interested, was later introduced as a South African Government agriculture official.

Richardson's fresh-faced self-confidence is rarely upset. When he met Bobby Locke in South Africa, Richardson began to play golf enthusiastically. Godfrey Evans thought Richardson's first efforts were "based on brute strength, and quite awful." But, completely unabashed by the cricket scores on his golf cards, Richardson was soon assuring his England colleagues that he might have made a career in golf if he had been introduced to the game earlier.

Many critics think that Richardson is also over-confident about his cricket. They feel he accepted his Test place so calmly that he now takes success for granted. "He is inclined to treat his cricket elders as intolerantly as if they were townsfolk on a farm walk," says a senior member of the Worcestershire club.

CONSIDERING himself a natural player, Richardson often shirks net practice and blandly ignores even the most expert advice. During the fifth Test in South Africa, George Duckworth, a team official, urged Richardson, normally a back-foot player, to play forward as the only way to survive on a broken wicket. Richardson went out to bat, played back as usual, and was out for nought. Back in the pavilion, he cheerfully blamed the lapse on a local laundry which had not washed his "lucky" shirt in time for the game.

Dick Howorth, the former Worcestershire player, remembers Richardson from a benefit game between the county and a schoolboy side during the 1940s. "The youngsters seemed unable to deal with our bowling," says Howorth, "so when the littlest chap of all, Richardson, came out to bat near the end, we decided to let him reach double figures and be top-scorer. But he played on so stubbornly and solidly we just could not get him out at all."

The son of a Hereford butcher, Richardson went to the city's Cathedral School. He was soon in trouble with his music mistress when cricket often delayed his piano lessons. He appeared to endure her reprimands meekly. "But underneath the keyboard," he says, "I was kicking her piano."

Richardson was equally determined to hit back at the opposition when playing for the M.C.C. against the Australians last year. He had to be helped off the field when a fast ball bounced high and crashed against his temple. Next morning, pale after a sleepless night, he insisted on resuming, and promptly drove a fierce delivery from Keith Miller for four runs.

During his grim eight-hour century, the slowest in Test history, at Johannesburg last December, Richardson was again struck on the head. At the tea interval, a South African player looked into the England dressing-room to see how the injury and the strain of the long innings were affecting the young batsman. He found Richardson entertaining his team-mates with a finger-snapping, rasping impersonation of Billy Daniels singing "That Old Black Magic."

Richardson has been a good mimic since childhood. For twenty years he has been imitating his teachers, his army sergeant-major and umpires who gave him out. His first public performance was in the ship's fancy dress contest on the way to South Africa. With his hair "permed" and sprinkled with sequins, silver tape edging the lapels of his white dinner jacket, and carrying a bunch of candles, he appeared as Liberace and won first prize.

Appointed captain of Worcestershire last year, Richardson soon showed that he was energetic enough both to lead and drive his men. Having improved his own suspect fielding to Test standard, he was not above interrupting championship games to rebuke slack fielding in the throaty vocabulary he developed as a sergeant instructor during National Service in the army. His enthusiastic tactics aroused some local criticism at first, but he produced the team spirit which took Worcestershire from near the foot of the county table to joint ninth from top.

Richardson has had eight seasons of first-class cricket. The run-out incident at Trent Bridge last June was near to wrecking his Test career at its outset. At one stage he was sprawled on the ground and Cowdrey was at the wrong wicket. While the Australians fumbled the ball in over-eager surprise, Cowdrey ran back to the other end and Richardson, leaving his bat on the turf, scrambled back over his crease.

At the end of the over the crowd was still talking about the escape when the two batsmen were seen to meet at mid-wicket. Many people presumed that Cowdrey, an Australian tour "veteran," was reassuring his new England colleague.

Instead, the young farmer leaned on his bat like a shooting stick, nodded towards the hubbub, and said: "If they want brighter cricket our little act seems to be keeping everybody pretty well entertained." THE END

THE CAPSTOCK SPECTRE

by CLIVE BURNLEY

Margaret had never haunted a castle before. She didn't realize that being a ghost could be so romantic

WHEN she got back to the door, it was locked. It was more than three hundred years since there had last been a prisoner in Capstock Castle; now there was Margaret Folder.

Half a dozen times, driving her little grey car towards Aunt Gwyneth's Welsh cottage, Margaret had glimpsed, a couple of miles from the road, the pink pinnacles of Capstock rising above the tree-peopled Border hills. For twenty miles before she came to the castle she would find herself thinking *I shall see it soon*; and when at last she did so, she always had a strong desire to turn off the main road and examine it more closely.

Eventually there came the day when she yielded to this impulse and drove into the narrow, bouncing by-road which turned left where the signpost said: ENGLISH YARMER: CAPSTOCK CASTLE: NO THROUGH ROAD.

She expected that this very minor highway would dip and zigzag over the hills—as it did—and finally bring her into a tarmacadam car-park with a British Legion attendant, ice-cream booths, and a cabin selling postcards. She expected the way to be well sign-posted, but instead the only further direction she found anywhere on its length was a small sign in a grove of trees reading: TO CAPSTOCK CASTLE: NATIONAL TRUST: FOOTPATH ONLY.

It was a warm afternoon in an unusually gay June. After she had parked her car among the birches, she walked up the lane in her frothy-skirted summer gossamer of faintly turquoise nylon. One party of descending tourists passed her, with cameras slung across their chests at instant readiness, like weapons which might be required in an expected ambush. She continued upwards through the dappled woods, passed over a stile, and then, two hundred yards away across the tussocky upland grass of a hilltop, saw the tinted walls of Capstock.

In a wooden hut in the ruins of the old barbican, a white-whiskered veteran sold her a six-penny admission ticket and a guide book.

"Don't get many here," he told her. "People won't walk fifty yards nowadays."

Margaret made her way across the wooden timber trestle which had replaced the ancient drawbridge over the moat. She passed next through the great oak door in the gatehouse and found herself in the bailey, where a stern notice said: VISITORS ARE WARNED TO TAKE ALL POSSIBLE CARE TO AVOID ACCIDENTS.

This, she soon discovered, was no frivolous warning. The outer walls and one complete tower were in a fair state of preservation, but elsewhere the ruins abounded in chasms and clefts, unexpected precipices, and worn spiral staircases that led to slabs poised like diving boards. In one or two places, where towers had fallen, their lower basement rooms remained as deep circular pits; in these depths and on occasional banks of rubble the elder tree and nettle grew, defying the neat gardening which had made level lawn of every more promising yard of land within the walls. A shirt-sleeved man was running over part of this with a motor-mower.

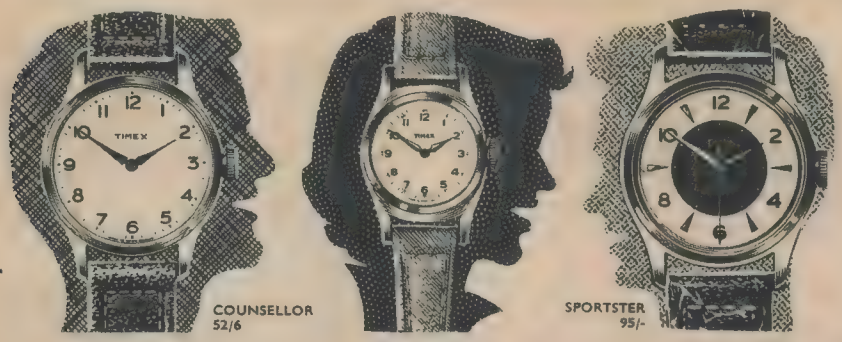
Clambering over the ruins came a family party of sightseers, who giggled at the castle as if they found it irresistibly amusing. Margaret didn't. It astonished her by fulfilling so completely, on close acquaintance, what it had promised when seen as a shadow on the horizon. Its sunlit red stone gave it warmth; and the charm of a glassless, mullioned window in the ruins of the great hall, the footworn depressions in the stone stairways and a thousand other small things made it seem homely and protective. It must have appeared very secure and comforting in a harsh world, Margaret thought, to those who had dwelt there before Cromwell brought his gunpowder to its walls.

It was a little arrow-slit of a window half way up the Unicorn tower which was Margaret's undoing. She looked from it over the rocky scarp beneath the castle; over the river below, sixty feet wide and glinting with diamonds; over the meadow and hedge of the valley; over the roofs of English Yarmer, where wood smoke curled from the chimneys; over acre after acre, parish after parish, county after county, with the trees crowding closer the farther one looked; over the first roll of foothills and farther yet, until the mountains of Wales, blue and magnificent, stood up along the horizon, entangled with the clouds of the sky.

She stood dreaming over this panorama while the autumn evening took on the velvet shades of twilight. It was a quarter past six when she broke away, came down from the tower, walked across the bailey, from which the tourists and

She peered about her through the darkness. And then Margaret saw something on top of the tower. She was so startled that for a moment she was frozen with terror . . .

ILLUSTRATED BY ZELINSKI



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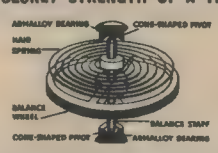

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the man with the motor-mower had gone, and approached the gatehouse.

When she reached the big oak door, it was locked. Reference to the guide-book she had bought informed her that the castle was not open to the public after five-fifteen.

Margaret was furious. Did Capstock swarm with so many visitors that the staff could not keep a check upon their numbers? Was it not part of the whiskered custodian's duty, or of that of the man with the mower, to see that all were out before they locked the door and went off carelessly to televiewing in their homes in the village?

She thought at first that it might not be difficult, if dangerous to stockings and light calf shoes, to clamber over the walls; but after hanging for a while over the dizzy drop into the moat, and then over the one down the scarp into the river, she realized that Capstock, from inside or out, still required scaling ladders.

Margaret had to face it: she was imprisoned in this ruin, out of which all warmth had gone with the sun, for the night.

A hurried reconnaissance did not reveal anything likely to comfort or assist her, except a tarpaulin which was laid over the motor-mower; this was her only bedclothing.

Selecting a dry corner out of the wind, she wrapped it about her. She smoked a cigarette, consoled herself with the thought that it would make a good story to tell, and then, winding herself closer in the stiff canvas, went, by sheer resolution, to sleep. . . .

She awoke, chilled and cramped, after several hours. It was now utter night, but a gibbous moon lit the riven walls with a cold and greenish glow. She stood up and looked about her.

It was perhaps fortunate that, when extremely frightened, she could not

New Forest Day

by JOHN BARRON MAYS

All day the broad sun shines and softly weaves
Through trees and glade a chequered patterning
Of light and shade that the wind-lifted leaves
Modulate in subtle harmonies
Of lyrical delight; in scattered gold
Of tormentil the summer hours are told.

And we who wander down green forest tracks
Discover at day's end the gathered sum
Of loveliness, the tender words and acts
Trivial seeming and yet rooted strong
As these great oaks long centuries have grown,
So silently love comes into her own.

scream, but was incapable of making any sound at all. This was a peculiarity of hers. For now she saw something so startling that for a moment she was frozen with terror. . . .

Outlined clearly against the sky on the top of the Unicorn tower, a man was standing. He stood there silently, gazing over the valley, some cloak-like garment over his shoulders; then he strode a few paces sure-footedly over the broken stone of the wall walk, his feet ringing on the flags.

Margaret knew that there had been no other person in the castle when she had searched it the previous evening.

She slipped out of her tarpaulin bedclothes. The figure had gone from the battlements and she could hear him coming heavy-footed down the tower staircase . . . down into the bailey, where she was.

It was not until some time later that Margaret understood what happened next. The man shouted something, and there followed a scrabbling and rending noise and then, from beneath her feet, a dull thump. The man had utterly disappeared.

After a moment it occurred to Margaret that he might have fallen into the circular-walled pit which was all that was left of the tower adjoining the Unicorn. Peering into it she could see nothing, but out of its utter blackness there came the sounds of heavy breathing and groans.

Now a new fear beset her. Whoever he might be, no man could fall an unexpected fifteen feet without serious injury. Margaret had only one thought: "Are you hurt?"

"Sorry to disappoint you," said the voice from the pit, "but I'm not. A rib or two perhaps—nothing mortal. So if you. . . ." He paused. "That's very odd. I never heard of you *talking* before."

"What on earth do you mean?"

"You are the famous White Lady, aren't you? But who else could you be, flitting around these ruins at three in the morning in filmy white what-nots?"

"This dress isn't white at all," she said. "It's Stratosphere Blue. My name's Folder and. . . ."

"How d'ye do," said the man in the darkness. "I'm Bill Timberlock. I'm very relieved you're wearing blue. But if you're not the fatal White Lady of Capstock, what the devil are you doing lurking about here, scaring honest citizens out of their wits?"

"I wanted to ask you exactly the same thing."

"Don't you realize I might have been killed?"

He began flashing a torch at the walls, which everywhere showed only a blank and unscalable face; then, without warning, he flashed it directly into Margaret's eyes.

"Sorry," he said. "Just wanted to make quite sure I couldn't see right through you. D'you know, I don't think I *can* get out of here, not without a ladder. Would you mind going and ringing the fire brigade or something?"

"I'm afraid I can't," Margaret said. "I'm locked in here, you see. I came to look at the castle and when I tried to get out. . . ."

"That's Sebastopol Sam," said the man in the pit sympathetically, "—old droopy whiskers at the gate. It's his memory. Swears he's only seventy-three, but I'm certain he fought in the Crimea. It's all right, though; I've got a key." He showed her something in his hand in the glow of the torch. "Here—catch!"

"Don't!" Margaret cried, but it was too late. She heard the key clink in the loose-piled, overgrown rubble behind her. She looked for it with her cigarette lighter and afterwards with his torch, which he managed to toss up on to the grass without breaking it; but it was clearly a hopeless search.

"I suppose that *was* rather silly of me," he said. "Never mind—while there's life there's hope. Look: you know over by the gatehouse where they've put up the little wooden bridge where the battlements fell in? Well, there's a rope hand-rail there. If you go up and unreeve it, sling the end down and take a turn round that pillar behind you, I can haul myself out."

"Just a minute," said Margaret. "Even if I could climb up there in the dark and undo the rope without pulling my fingernails to bits—even if I could, I'm not sure that I would."

"Oh, I say!" protested the man. "Don't be a rotter. Why ever not?"

"I may be a little out of date," Margaret said, "but when I come across strange men clambering about places like this at dead of night, my first reaction is one of suspicion. After all, down there you're safe. And so am I, up here."

"Oh, please! I don't look like Dracula, do I?"

"I don't know. You might have three heads, for all I can see. What are you doing here, anyway?"

"At the moment I'm being hoist with my own petard. Shall I translate that?"

"I've heard the phrase before."

"Well, you see," he told her, "I'm a Timberlock. My ancestors used to

fling people into these dungeons and now *I've* been flung into one. See what I mean? Oh, we weren't afraid of anything in those days. The family motto's in Norman French, but very roughly it means: 'And the same to you.' The only thing that made us scream for mercy was the White Lady of Capstock."

"Who *is* this White Lady?"

"A sort of family doom. When any Timberlock saw her, he knew he had just about twenty-four hours to set his affairs in order. All my remote ancestors are supposed to have seen her when their time came. I never believed in her, of course, but all the same I had wondered, coming here at night, what I'd do if I did see her. Of course, I know now—just jump for it. Will you please get that rope now?"

"I don't know that I will. All this sounds just pure romance."

"Yes," he said happily. "It *is* romantic, isn't it? Couldn't have met more dramatically, could we? I can't see you very well from down here, but I do hope you're dazzlingly beautiful. Are you?"

"Not in the least," Margaret said severely. "And I think that rope had better stay where it is."

"Oh, come now. Even if you're unspeakably ugly, I bet you're cold and

SOLITUDE—1

The wise man is never less alone than when he is alone.

Jonathan Swift

hungry, and I didn't come to Capstock empty-handed. Somewhere in the old pile—I won't tell you where and you'd never find it—I've hidden a basket. Know what's in it? A flask of hot coffee; another of hot, thick soup; a great pile of sandwiches in plastic bags; cheese; apples; biscuits; flask of brandy; nut-milk chocolate. . . . There, now. Get me out of here and we'll go fifty-fifty."

"Well—I expect I'm a fool," Margaret said. "But where did you say that rope was . . . ?"

Bill was as good as his word. He not only produced his picnic basket from an old hearth in the gatehouse, but also insisted on giving Margaret his duffle coat and wrapping her legs in a travel rug which he had also brought with him.

They sat on the footings of the ruined chapel in the moonlight and shared the contents of his basket with extraordinary appetite.

Margaret felt much better after that. "But you still haven't told me," she reminded him, "why you're here at this time of night."

"A long and unlikely story," Bill said, sipping his steaming coffee. "The fact is, I'm the heir of all the Timberlocks. Didn't inherit anything, except the doubtful privilege of an interview with the White Lady."

"And you come here to dig for your great-grandfather's treasure, or something fantastic like that, I suppose?"

"Unfortunately, no. I've always liked coming to Capstock. Pure sentiment, I suppose. Besides, when I was very down, it bolstered up the ego. I used to come here and look at the great public sniping at the old walls with its box cameras and sitting on the wall walk eating potato crisps, and it gave me a lift to think it was more mine than theirs."

"Did it? How odd."

"True, all the same. You know, nobody's lived here for three hundred years and the family sold what was left in William the Fourth's reign, but somehow I seem to belong to the place. To tell you the truth, I'm writing a book about it."

"Really?"

"Yes, truly. I've written odd things before, but this is historical fiction: more history than fiction, too; all the old stories of the Timberlocks—enough blood and romance to fill twenty volumes. And I come up here to work details out, you see—just where it was they killed Duke Charles, and exactly how the captured heiress could have escaped across the moat, and that sort of thing. And to soak in atmosphere. Terribly interesting—for me."

"And do you often come up here at night?"

"Now and again. I've got a cottage down in Yarmer and the National Trust were quite good about it when I explained what I was after. I like an occasional night in the castle; dawn from the battlements is magnificent. Absolutely magnificent."

"So were those sandwiches," said Margaret. "I can't thank you enough. I can't remember when I enjoyed any food more."

"I'm glad," Bill told her. "And now it's getting near time—near dawn, I mean. Do come up the battlements and see it. Even if you were hard-boiled solid—and I know you're not—it would stir something."

The dawn was, in fact, extremely beautiful. Luminous green cracks first broke the sombre eastern sky, then the great dark panorama developed pink summits and purple recesses. The warm stone of Capstock began to glow. The air grew every moment softer. Night passed overhead like a shadow, fled duskily to the west, sought refuge in the far mountains and was defeated as each peak and crag flamed scarlet.

"Pretty good, isn't it?" asked Bill Timberlock. "I wonder if I could afford colour photography."

"I must sit down," said Margaret. "I feel so nicely tired."

So they sat on the wall walk of the Unicorn tower, leaning against the stones of the inner crenellations, drowsily watching the world at their feet take colour and comfort from the sun. And Margaret listened sleepily to Bill Timberlock talking about his book.

"It ought to be a great success," he

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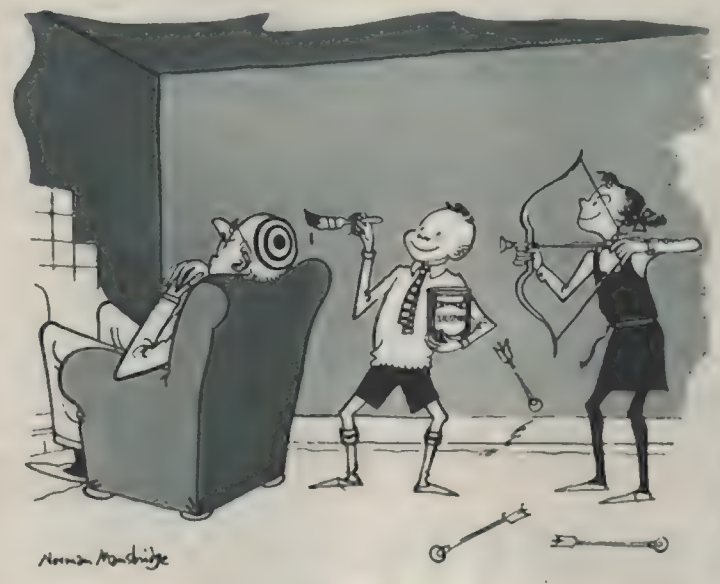

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"Children's television is on!"

said. "After all, people do like fictional family chronicles covering several generations in three volumes; and will fact spoil mine?

"It will be full of tales of blood and war and sweet romance, all as true as last Sunday's newspaper—and what a final chapter, what an ending!"

"A good ending?" Margaret murmured.

"Perfect," said Bill. "Mind you, I had meant to finish the thing with Uncle Henry's death at Gallipoli—hadn't meant to bring myself into it at all. But now I must." He smacked his fist into the palm of his other hand. "What an ending—symbolic, sentimental, full of hope for the future! One final, stimulating episode—how at last, in the cold light of a twentieth-century moon, I saw the White Lady of Capstock—and how, when I touched her, she turned out to be the Girl In Stratosphere Blue."

And he did touch her; Margaret drowsily accepted the casual arm he put around her shoulder.

"Glad to have helped," she said.

"Of course," Bill went on, "we can't leave it there. We can't defy historical tradition. Why, when a girl got into the clutches of the Timberlocks at Capstock, you know, she didn't have much say in what happened to her."

"I don't know what you're talking about," whispered Margaret, her eyes closed.

"I wish you'd tell me your first name," Bill said. "It's discourteous to make love to anyone if you don't know what to call them. What is it?"

"It's Margaret."

"Ah, how delightful! Well, Margaret, I'm going to kiss you."

"All right," Margaret said dozily. "Only don't wake me up. . . ."

Two hours later Mr. James Whittaker, known also as Sebastopol Sam, found these two people propped up on the battlements in the full sunlight, fast asleep. He was an old man of prim views and the sight shocked him a little.

"Oh, don't worry about *her*, Sam," said Bill Timberlock, raising his own eyelids lazily. "She's the very end, that's what she is—the very end. Or at least the last chapter."

This worried Mr. Whittaker even more; that a man so well-bred could speak in this way.

"But Sir William. . . ."

"Now you beat it, old boy," said Bill. "I'll wake her. If she sees you, she'll want to prosecute you for unlawful imprisonment. Why don't you look round before you lock up? But perhaps it's just as well you didn't. You run along; I promise I'll do what I can to persuade her not to go to the police."

Perhaps that's why Bill Timberlock married Margaret Folder within six months, at English Yarmer parish church, under the shadow of the great pink walls of Capstock; although he probably had some other reasons as well. THE END

Raffles and the Husbands' Boat

Continued from page 22

this day excursion—and they've picked on us—into poking and prying about a house called the Villa Gabriel."

"I don't like this," I said. "We'd better steer clear of the business."

"I don't know about that," said Raffles. "It's rather interesting." He went on thoughtfully with his lunch, then suddenly chuckled. "Bunny, those two fellows, Steve and Bill. It occurs to me that, if they could return to Dilys and Katie with an adventure to tell of, their whole self-respect would be restored."

He wrote in my notebook, in pencilled capitals, tore out the page, and showed me what he had written; "If you're game for an adventure, scout round the Villa Gabriel, in the Impasse Rocher. A Well-wisher."

He folded the paper, rose to his feet. "See you on deck presently."

Puzzled and uneasy, I went on deck. The breeze blew salty, and gulls cried about the fluttering bunting. Ahead, in the sunshine, was the bright little French resort, in a hollow between cliffs. I felt a light touch on my arm.

"So far, so good," Raffles murmured. "Steve carries his blue ticket in the left-hand pocket of his jacket. When he feels for the ticket presently, he'll find that note I just slipped in."

Moving to a vantage point, we leaned on the rail to watch the gangway hove into place.

"There they go," Raffles said.

Steve and Bill had just shown their tickets and stepped ashore. I saw that Steve, frowning, was unfolding a bit of paper. He stopped dead. Bill stopped with him. Both chaps turned and stared back at the ship. Then they spoke to a stevedore.

"Asking directions to the Impasse Rocher," Raffles murmured. "Excellent! They've taken the challenge, as I felt sure they would."

In the quivering heat-sheen of afternoon we threaded the narrow streets of the town.

The road we followed was a dusty, tree-lined avenue leading up out of the town. Steve and Bill, ahead, vanished into a side street.

"That must be the Impasse Rocher," Raffles said.

We walked fast to the corner. The side street was a suburban backwater, deeply tree-shaded. On each side there seemed to be only one or two houses, rambling old places almost buried in foliage. We were just in time to catch a glimpse of Steve and Bill as they slipped in furtively through a gateway.

"Obviously," Raffles said, "the Villa Gabriel."

We had not taken a dozen paces when a sound checked us, a half-stifled shout. It came from the overgrown garden of the Villa Gabriel. Raffles darted forward.

"It seems to be an unoccupied

house, Bunny," he whispered. "I caught just a glimpse of Steve and Bill, with sacks jammed down over their heads, being frog-marched in through the door by a couple of men. They must have been lying in wait."

From the house sounded the bang of a door. I heard footsteps, and a man's voice speaking in French.

"With that food we dumped in the cellar," the voice was saying, "they'll come to no harm if we have to leave them there for a month. Nobody will ever look for them here."

Two men came out through the gateway. They were well-dressed. One was a very big man, broad-shouldered, bearded. He was polishing a ribboned pince-nez.

"Crudd and Lillian chose a likely-looking couple," he went on. "This evening, come sailing time of the Husbands' Boat, Crudd will report to his captain that two passengers are missing. The captain will have to notify the police here, with names and descriptions furnished by Crudd. The police will jump to the conclusion that the smoke-pot job was planned from England. This is a red herring as big as a whale across our track."

The two Frenchmen were passing within arm's reach of us.

"So long as no one gets hurt," the other man said uneasily.

"*Mince, alors!*" said the big man, with an arrogant flourish of his eyeglasses. "Violence is for fools. None of us is armed. We use only brains—*my* brains."

They were walking rapidly away along the Impasse. Their voices faded. I was perspiring. "What the devil?" I said. I peered at Raffles.

He was exultant. "This is something big, Bunny," he said. "I can think of only one thing that's big in this town—the Casino."

The two Frenchmen had turned to the left out of the Impasse Rocher. We followed at a discreet distance. As Raffles had surmised, they went straight to the Casino, a new-looking, elaborate building on the cliff-top, surrounded on three sides by spacious gardens and fronting on the avenue.

Ahead, the two Frenchmen had raised their hats. They were talking to a young woman.

"The perfidious Lillian," Raffles murmured. "So Crudd got her ashore all right."

SOLITUDE—2

The worst solitude is to have no true friendships.

Francis Bacon

The bearded man hailed a passing cab. He handed the girl into it.

"Evidently Lillian's part is played," Raffles said. "She's out of it. Now, what are the two men doing?"

The shorter of the men was walking up the Casino steps. He went in. The big, bearded man had paused by a closed carriage, with a fine black horse in the shafts, which stood a little apart from the others. He opened the door and stepped inside.

"He's the man to watch," Raffles said. "He's the boss—the kingpin."

With the horse at an unhurried trot, the carriage was moving away from us. We followed on foot. At the far end of the railings that enclosed the Casino gardens, the carriage turned to the left.

"It's pulling up, I think," Raffles said. "Yes. Quick, Bunny! Over the railings and into the gardens!"

In a moment, we had dropped down among the bushes on the inside.

"They've pulled up at a side gate in the railings," he said softly. "The kingpin's picking the lock of the gate. He's making everything ready for a quick departure in the carriage."

My heart hammered. "They're going to rob the Casino?"

"That's been obvious for some time," Raffles said drily. "I can't quite see how they plan to do it, though. No violence, no weapons. In view of that, I feel we're justified in playing our own hand—in the interests

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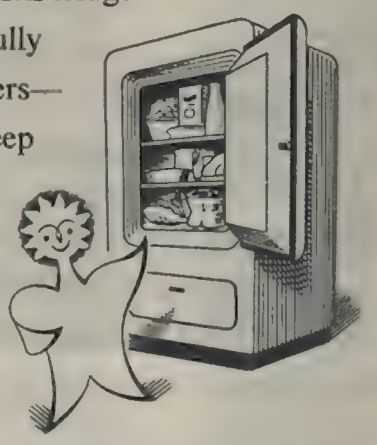

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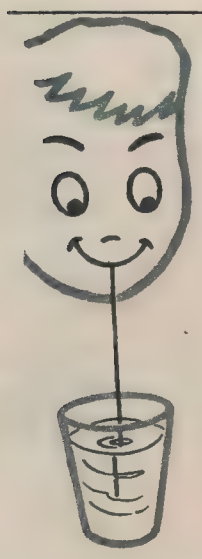

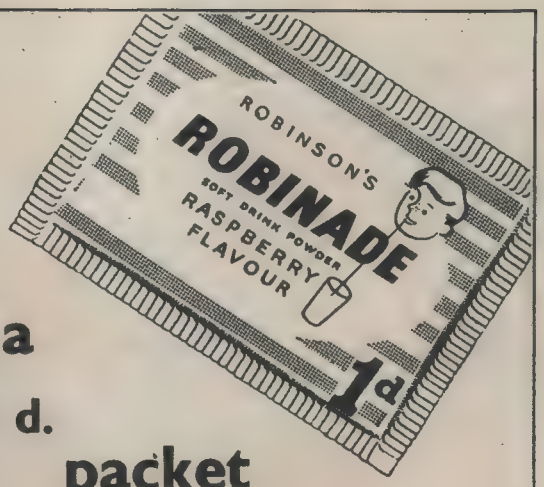

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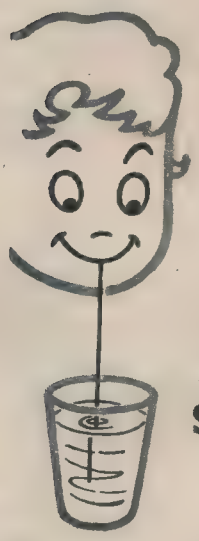

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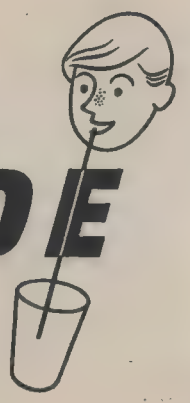

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of old George Evett's benefit fund."

We waited, crouching among the bushes. Suddenly, a confused hubbub of sound within the building stirred the hair on my scalp. I heard a crash of glass. From a shattered first-floor window, there poured out a dense black cloud of smoke.

"Fire!" I breathed. "They've set the place afire."

Raffles grabbed my arm.

"Bunny, we've been slow," he said. "That word the kingpin used. I didn't grasp it. 'Smoke-pot!' Think how rapidly dense clouds of smoke can be produced in enclosed spaces. They've managed to plant smoke-pots in odd corners of the Casino. Under cover of the confusion, our friends have swept the tables of gold and banknotes and are bolting for it. Yes, here comes one, look—through that smashed window."

A figure had darted out on to the first-floor balcony, vaulted the rail and landed on the flowerbed below. A din of shouts and cries sounded within the building. A second and third figure appeared together on the balcony and vaulted the rail. All three men were racing across the lawns in our direction. A fourth man appeared on the balcony.

"He must be the last, surely," Raffles said. "They've only that one carriage for the escape. The fourth man's our meat, Bunny."

Crouching, he wove his way forward through the bushes. I followed. One after another three figures raced past, breathing hard, making for the open gate where the escape carriage waited. The fourth man came pounding up. Raffles reached out a hand from the shrubbery and caught a flying ankle. The man came down flat on his face.

Instantly, Raffles was on him. He ripped off the man's jacket, the sleeves inside out, and drew back into the bushes. The man staggered to his feet and bolted out through the gate. We heard the carriage make off.

"Excellent," Raffles said. He was transferring to his own pockets the gold and sheafs of banknotes crammed into the pockets of the jacket he held. "Come on—out through the gate here."

Not until we were some way down the avenue to the town did Raffles pause and ask for my notebook and pencil. He wrote something, tore out the page and returned the notebook.

"The corner of the Impasse Rocher is just ahead," he said.

We walked along the Impasse and entered the garden of the Villa Gabriel. The door of the house, unlocked, opened with a dismal creak of hinges.

"Anybody here?" Raffles called.

An urgent shouting and thumping sounded from somewhere below. We found the cellar steps, and unbolted the door. Steve and Bill, much dishevelled, stood blinking in the light.

"Good heavens!" said Raffles. "Surely we saw you chaps on the Husbands' Boat? How on earth did you get here?"

They both began to explain at once, but Raffles interrupted them.

"Found a note in your pocket?" he said. "Why, so did I!" He produced the page he had torn from my notebook a few minutes before.

"Identical messages!" Raffles exclaimed. "Absolutely identical! My friend Manders here and I thought the note I found in my pocket must be some kind of practical joke. We decided to ignore it. We fooled away the time. Then we thought that, before we returned, it'd be amusing to find out if there really *was* a Villa Gabriel."

"Lucky for us you came," Steve said.

"We'd better get back to the ship," Raffles said, "and see if we can find out who's responsible."

When we reached the steamer, Cudd was on duty collecting tickets from husbands with smoke-smudged faces straggling back after police questioning at the casino. At the sight of Raffles and me, the steward's own face went white. We walked past him without a word.

"Something tells me," Raffles murmured, "that Cudd will presently be found to have gone absent."

Sure enough, not long after the steamer sailed, much delayed but with all passengers at last safely aboard, we heard a steward calling: "Cudd! Cudd! Anyone seen Arthur Cudd?"

Raffles chuckled. We were walking the deck together. Already the lights of France had receded far astern. We had the deck virtually to ourselves.

"It was a neat dodge, the smoke-pots," Raffles said. "Wish we'd thought of it ourselves, Bunny. Still"—he pressed his hands lightly to his pockets—"even after we've made sure old George Evett gets his little tavern, we shan't be entirely stony for a while. We'll be——" He broke off. "Here are Steve and Bill. You fellows found out anything?"

"Nothing," Steve said. "But you know what we think? We think it's just possible that those notes may be tied up in some way with the amazing thing that happened at the Casino—the robbery there. How it all links up, of course, we'll never know. It's a mystery—a complete mystery."

They went off together, and I laughed, a bit enviously. "They just can't wait," I said, "to get back and pour out the whole story of their adventure to Dilys and Katie, and the same is true, I imagine, of the other men aboard. You know, Raffles, it's a strange thing, but a trip on the Husbands' Boat makes a chap think."

"We'd better go down and get a drink," said Raffles. He chuckled quietly and put a friendly hand on my shoulder. "After all, Bunny, what else can a bachelor do?" THE END

I refused to die

Continued from page 9

this. It will be more useful to you."

Premsingh looked up at me again. "Goodbye, sahib."

I turned and led my men down the hillside. I had not even had time to think of him, back there beneath the teak trees, when we heard a rifle shot. I knew without returning that Premsingh was dead. . . .

Stealthily, treading like cats in the sparkling freshness of the new day, we came to the scene of the ambush. Evidence of the defeat of No. 2 Column was spread out terrifyingly. The whole of a two hundred-yard strip of railway line was scattered with the bodies of men, mules and abandoned equipment.

I saw Kulbahadur stiffen. A movement on the edge of the jungle fifty yards away had caught his eye. My right hand slid to my tommy gun.

Three stooping figures were advancing towards a heap that last night had been a Gurkha soldier. One of them held a dagger at the Gurkha's throat. Had the Japs returned to knife any of the wounded who might be alive?

The figures moved to the next body. This time it was that of a British soldier. Again I saw the flash of the dagger at the body's throat. Then the man with the dagger stood up and turned so that his face was towards me. I could not restrain a shout of delight. It was Lieutenant Arthur Best, a Chindit who had been almost a continuous companion since I had joined the column. I ran through the jungle towards him, shouting greetings.

Arthur said that he had come back to collect identity discs from our dead. That was what he had been doing with the dagger.

His experiences had been much the same as mine. After the ambush he had ducked into the jungle with a few Gurkhas. He had, though, been lucky enough to meet up with our column R.A.F. officer, Flight-Lieutenant Eddie Edmonds, and another officer, Lieutenant John Griffiths. Between them they had collected some men and were salvaging as much kit as possible.

With my own Gurkhas I set to work to help the party. In a short time we had found two mules and loaded them with food, a medium machine-gun, ammunition, demolition charges and detonators.

Back in the jungle I marched behind Arthur to where he had left Eddie, John and the others.

In peacetime, the massive, fearless Eddie was a big game hunter. Now his object in life was to kill as many Japs as he could in the shortest time. Although he was officially a flying man, his jungle knowledge and strength of character automatically made him our leader.

"Well, if it isn't the boy," he grinned on seeing me arrive through the trees. He called a council of war to decide which way we should march out of Burma.

We decided to set off south-east, after hiding a large box of explosive under the railway line. Later, an explosion, tremendous even to us ten miles away, told us that an enemy supply train had found it.

Later we arrived at a little valley containing a brook. There, with the equanimity of a father at a family picnic, was Doc Lusk, our Irish-Canadian medical officer, sharing the "medical comforts" whisky bottle with four medical orderli

We brewed tea and cooked a meal. That night we slept soundly with nothing to cause our sentries alarm.

WHEN I awoke, I was chilled and stiff. Feeling a need for the jovial doctor's company, I threw off my blanket and walked to where he was sitting on a log.

Near us a medical orderly stirred in his sleep, and pushed out a bare arm in a drowsy stretch.

Then—Doc Lusk and I saw it in the same instant—a Russell's Viper reared up behind him. Its head was back, its mouth open, and its fangs were on the point of striking down into the man's flesh.

I had my revolver out faster than ever before. There was a flash and a bang. The snake's head became pulp.

At the explosion, the whole camp awoke, guns at the ready. Eyes turned to where Doc and I stood. I looked at his gun and mine and saw that my hammer was still back, whereas the muzzle of his was smoking.

"You know, Ian," he said, "I have never fired one of these things before. . . ."

We spent two days and nights in that little valley. No. 1 Column joined us. We survivors of the ambush were absorbed into No. 1 Column and radio contact was made with Wingate to scheme our next move.

We were ordered to march to Mogok under Lieutenant - Colonel Henry Alexander, who was in overall command of 1 and 2 Columns. But first we had to make quick preparations to receive an air drop because we had a feeling that the Japs were closing in.

We built three fires in a large natural clearing and waited. Soon two Dakotas came into view.

Having exchanged recognition signals and made a dummy run, they swept over us. Thuds in the darkness assured us that the canisters of supplies were coming down right on target.

For each man there was ammunition, food for fourteen days—though we knew it would have to last at least three weeks—and a much-needed complete change of uniform.

At once, we felt fitter, smarter, and more deadly as a fighting force.

It was Kulbahadur's birthday. Arthur and I determined that he should have a treat. We boiled two mess tins of powdered biscuits in a little water, studded the resultant stodgy mess with dates and covered it with grated chocolate. Then we stuck nineteen matches into our "birthday cake" with their heads uppermost.

We lit these "candles" and Kulbahadur blew them out with one blow. He cut the cake with the same *kukri* that he kept razor-sharp for slicing off Japanese heads. The three of us ate the entire concoction. Afterwards we felt really gorged for the first time in weeks.

The next morning was probably the

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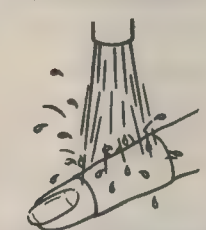

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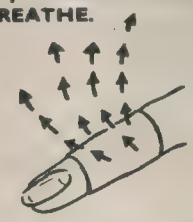

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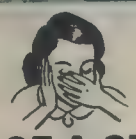

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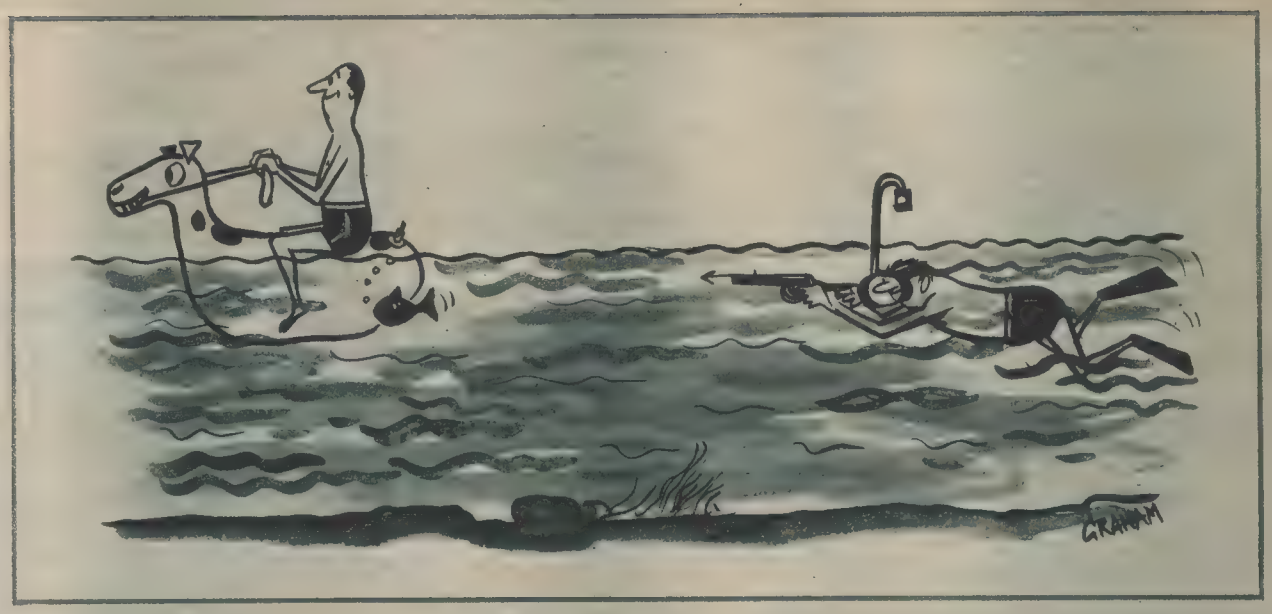

happiest of the expedition. Mail was distributed. It was from folk who had no idea of the perilous undertaking we had embarked upon. A note from my mother said that she had received a letter I had sent from Quetta and she realized how the extremes of climate there might trouble me. Because of this, she went on, she was sending "a small Christmas present."

I slit with my commando knife the bindings round a cardboard box. Inside, neatly folded, were a pair of mittens and a balaclava helmet made of heavy wool guaranteed to keep out the worst cold that a North Indian hill station could inflict upon me.

In another letter, a girl friend in Delhi asserted that she could see no reason why I could not arrange with my commanding officer to get away for a long weekend and go to her twenty-first birthday party on March 20. As I sat there in the jungle, I realized that March 20 was tomorrow.

From all around came snatches of conversation as the British troops read their letters and picked out bits suitable for public discussion.

Near me a corporal from Liverpool said: "The wife's got a rise."

"Oh?" said the sergeant beside him, with just a trace of cynicism.

"Yes, she gets five quid a week now," declared the corporal proudly.

"Oh?" said the sergeant, his cynicism more marked.

"It seems she's pretty highly regarded there and the boss is teaching her book-keeping."

"Ah!" said the sergeant. . . .

Day after day we pushed through the jungle, hacking, tearing, straining, aching. Food ran low and Atebrin, a drug for warding off malaria, became scarce. Men collapsed.

One day a British soldier went mad. He had been cutting for about an hour when he just could not go on any longer. With a scream he ran at the bamboo and tried to pull it apart with his bare hands. Before anyone could restrain him his hands were lacerated horribly. Soon the bacteria-laden atmosphere infected his wounds. Despite all attention he died.

THEN came a dramatic change of plan. Instructions were radioed from headquarters. "Abandon heavy equipment. Destroy mules. Get out of Burma."

G.H.Q. in Delhi had decided to end the operation. We had done our job. The Wingate raid had successfully dislocated the Japanese plans for an early attack on India. Some 30,000 troops earmarked for thrusts into Assam had been sent chasing after us. We had played an important part in thwarting the German-Japanese boasts of "meeting in Persia in 1943."

Now it was up to us to extricate ourselves through territory full of troops. We lost no time in destroying our heavy equipment and carrying out the sordid task of butchering the mules.

We set out a much lightened force, intent on a quick exit from Burma by means of a four-day, hundred-mile march to the Chinese border. We found that we had to cross a steep mountain, the summit of which overlooked Mong Mit, a Jap base which had been one of our targets. Despite the proximity of the enemy, we had to take repeated rests. We climbed so high that we walked clear of the jungle. The sun beat down on us.

Halt was finally called when we neared the summit. Major George Dunlop, the commander of No. 1 Column, whose red beard gave him a buccaneering look, called the officers together, and ordered a rest until moonrise. We dispersed to put our men in defensive positions. Afterwards, I stretched out on the barren ground and closed my eyes. . . .

I awoke with a start, snatched from sleep by bullets which shattered our radio set—our only link with headquarters—on a rocky ledge above me.

"Support Platoon stand to!" I shouted, pulling on my equipment.

I strained my eyes towards the jungle, but for a while nothing stirred. Then Jap machine-guns and rifles fired

SOLITUDE—3

Solitude: a good place to visit, but a poor place to stay.

Josh Billings

from among the trees. Mortar bombs burst around us. Screams told that we had suffered our first casualties. The air was alive with the hum of metal and stone fragments. I wriggled close to a boulder.

A little to my left, Kulbahadur slipped his *kukri* from its scabbard. He placed the broad curved blade at his side. Following his example, I took out my knife.

A friend of mine, Captain Vivian Wetherall, was farther down the slope. "Kill those men. KILL!" he shouted.

He had seen the enemy advancing out of the trees.

"Support Platoon—enemy in front—FIRE!" I ordered.

A Japanese n.c.o. was picked off as he dashed between two trees. He leaped high into the air and rolled before lying still on the ground.

Above all the noise I heard a scream. I turned to look at one of my men. He was holding his face. Blood spurted between his fingers.

The Japs detached themselves from the jungle and emerged into the sunlight. They advanced slowly behind long bayonets. They began to trot. The trot became a run. They loomed upon us. Six yards to go, five, four, three.

I squeezed the trigger. The Jap was flung backwards by the point-blank impact of my bullets. Blood gushed from his mouth as he hit the ground.

My companions' aim was equally devastating.

The attack was beaten off. All up the slope lay dead and crumpled Japs.

In the late afternoon the enemy changed their tactics. Mortar bombs landed among us again.

Suddenly, my surroundings exploded in a blast of hot air that hurled me over to lie wounded six feet outside the perimeter of our defences.

I could not move. My left leg was numb. I twisted round to see why and discovered that the khaki covering my hip had been ripped. Around the rent was a darkening stain.

I tried to pull myself back inside our defences. Faces peered down at me. Completely disregarding the bullets, Kulbahadur and Lalbahadur pulled me back over the boulders until I dropped into temporary safety once more.

Kulbahadur rummaged in my pack and withdrew a phial of morphia. Captain Norman Stocks, the column M.O., ripped off the top, exposing the sterilized needle. He jabbed it into my arm. I lapsed into unconsciousness.

When I came round it was dark and quiet. A figure rose from behind a rock. It was Arthur Best.

"Hallo, old boy. How do you feel?"

My head swam. I did not answer.

"We're pulling out soon. The Japs are licking their wounds after that pasting we gave them," he went on. "We are going to try to cross the road before Jap reinforcements arrive."

"We are going now?" I asked.

"In about half an hour," replied Arthur, watching me closely.

"How bad is my wound?"

"Oh, it's nothing much. A mortar splinter is still in there, though. The doc wanted to take it out, but Colonel Alexander said we have got to push on."

Arthur's eyes did not meet mine as he finished speaking. He had said enough for me to know the truth—*Colonel Alexander said we have got to push on.*

The colonel, a small, slimly built regular soldier who had grown a black beard, came up with Major Dunlop.

"Any better now?" asked the colonel.

"Yes, thank you, sir, but I'm still a bit weak."

"That's not surprising. The doc said you lost a lot of blood. How does the wound feel?"

Suddenly I was hot with fear. A vision of Premsingh leaped to my mind. "Your wound is not fatal," a voice inside me shouted. "It is not even serious. All you need is a few days' rest." But common sense told me that those few days were precisely what the column needed for its escape.

Colonel Alexander put a hand on my shoulder. "Do you think you can possibly keep up?"

I determined to tell him that I could. There was no harm in saying so. Possibly, somehow or other, the others would help to keep me going.

But in the colonel's eyes I saw not only pity, but also the exhaustion of the burden of responsibility weighing on him. It was no good. I could not bluff it out. "I think, sir, I had better stay here."

"We'll carry you down to the road," he said. "You'll have a good chance

if you surrender unarmed. Goodbye and good luck."

"Good luck, old boy," said Major Dunlop.

They turned and walked away. They did not look at me again. The sentence of death had been passed.

Arthur and Kulbahadur carried me down the mountain and sat me in a small hollow overlooking the road. The rest of the column was vanishing into the jungle. I reached out and grasped Arthur's hand. I had to make the final gesture. If he waited much longer I should break down.

"See you after the war," I said.

"Good luck, Ian." Then Arthur turned and was gone.

"See you after the war" was echoing through my mind when I caught a flash of moonlight on steel. Kulbahadur had not left me and was wielding his *kukri*, enlarging the clearing around me.

"Thank you, Kulbahadur," I said. "I shall be comfortable."

"No, sahib," he replied. "It may be big enough for one, but it is not yet big enough for two. I am your orderly. I stay with you."

"No, Kulbahadur," I said. "You must not stay. What good would it do? I cannot walk and we would certainly be captured."

The young Oriental face, at first defiant, lost some of its resolve. "Go," I said. "It is my wish—and it is my order."

He hesitated, frowning. Then discipline had its effect. He sheathed his *kukri*. Slowly he extended his hand.

"Goodbye, sahib," he said. "We will meet again. I know that we will." He turned and, with a rustle of leaves, was gone.

It was only when I was alone that I appreciated the hopelessness of my predicament. The delayed shock of the wound struck me. It seemed as though the pain would never let up. I slumped back, played out in body and mind.

I wrapped my blanket more closely around my body. Then suddenly, unpredictably, I was asleep—to awake at the sound of the truckload of Jap soldiers coming along the road.

As I lay there with the ten Japs in the truck framed in my gun sights, my finger paused at the instant of pressing the trigger.

What if I did not kill all of them with my first magazine? I would have to change magazines. Even as I clipped on the fresh one the rôles of hunter and hunted would change. The Japs would sneak up through the cover of the bamboo thickets. And what mercy could I expect? The only possible mercy would be quick dispatch by a burst of fire.

To press the trigger would sound my own death knell. I could not do it.

My duty was to kill Japs, but I had failed. With increasing shame I watched the soldiers dismount from their truck, unmolested.

I heard their officer gabble out instructions. I watched the men break up into two parties, one crossing to the far side of the road and the other taking up position on my side of it. Fanning out into the jungle, the parties pressed forward, each man searching for signs of the escaping column.

The soldiers on my side of the road were so close that I could see every detail of their uniforms—the puttees, breeches and the shirts done up at the neck. Some had soft hats with large peaks; others the more conventional domed helmets. Their rifles were slung over their shoulders.

A yell from one of them announced that he had discovered something. The officer took over the search from there. With a purposefulness which seemed to indicate that he knew where I was hidden, he came up the slope towards me.

I could see that he was very excited, and could hear his breathing. Only a miracle could save me.

He had his pistol in his left hand, thrust forward accusatively. Then in an utter agony of mind I watched him draw his sword from its scabbard.

NEXT WEEK: I shelter from death in a jungle Shangri-la

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S6 4

The unforgiven

Continued from page 18

rattle began at once. Rachel tried to call Andy, but before she could get control of her voice he was at her side. He looked at Rachel, questioning, with the wide-eyed look that sometimes made him seem a little boy. She nodded, dry-eyed.

The rattle stopped, and Andy moved closer; his competent hands gently pressed Matthilda's ribs, and the effort to breathe began again. But the second time it stopped, Rachel took Andy's hand, and wouldn't let him start it any more. She drew the sheet over Matthilda's face.

Andy stood looking down at the lifeless form, his face twisting and his breath coming hard as he tried not to cry.

"The ladle," Rachel reminded him. "I'll do what's left to be done here."

He nodded and went back to his work. He was sniffling as he went, and wiping his nose on his bare arm; but his hands were still sure as he squatted upon the hearth.

The sun went down; but the drums kept on, building again and again from a softly pulsing beginning to a thunderous climax. Sometimes the off-key, "Hiyah, hiyah" of medicine songs could be heard. Rachel brought water and clean clothes to the bedroom, and closed the door.

Alone, she put a bandage over the eyes, so that they would rest closed, and another to hold shut the jaw. *They'll never touch you*, she promised silently. *They'll never take away your pretty hair.*

She stripped the bed, freshening it with one of their two best sheets, and covering Matthilda with the other one.

She could be alive and well, and taking care of her boys. She could have enjoyed them a long time. Except for me.

Unlike the others, Rachel had a clear conviction as to what had caused this death. She believed that Matthilda had quite literally died of a broken heart. Yet she had been sure of this for too long to feel it greatly, now that the inevitable was past. What she felt was a great weight of tiredness, held up by a single thin wire of resolution containing all her strength. . . .

An hour had passed, but the slow twilight was still clear, and the drums were going as before as Rachel came out of the bedroom and closed the door.

"Well, anyhow," Andy said, "these here will be the first toy soldiers ever did really fight, I guess. I stretched 'em into twenty more thirty-six calibre. For your Whitney."

"That was rattle-headed," Rachel's tone was cold. "What will you do when the Walker's empty?"

"I always got my knife," he said—and immediately saw that he didn't. "Hey—you seen my skin-out knife?"

She went back into the bedroom and got Andy's narrow-bladed sheath knife—the one she had been going to take with her when she ran away . . . before Matthilda's illness stopped her.

"I figure, though, you better wear this," Andy said. He buckled the belt round her. For himself he got the Bowie they used for a carver, and stuck it in his waistband.

They laid out their weapons and the few loads. Once it was dark, anything that became mislaid would be lost for ever. Rachel laid the things needed beside the powder horn on a corner of the table, where her hands could find them in the dark. Andy got the axe, and stood it by the door.

Now the drums built up to one more climax, and did not start again. They left a silence that rang in the ears.

Again the back wall brought them the sound of hoofs trampling about, somewhere nearby. But the horse movement formed no pattern, other than an unreadable shuffling about, and in a little while was quiet.

"Oh, say—by the way——" Andy had his eye glued to a loophole, and he kept it there. He was trying to sound about four times more casual than he knew how to do. "Remember to save your last shot. You will, won't you? Count careful—just awful careful—every time you let off the six-gun. Because you'll need one more, if they ever get in. You know?"

She didn't answer him. She threw a bucket of water on the fire, and stepped away from the answering explosion of steam.

"Rachel? Did you hear?"

"I heard you, Andy." No use arguing. But she had no intention of wasting even one lead soldier on herself, no matter what.

"The main thing is——"

Andy broke off and jumped for the buffalo gun. Rachel got to a door loop. The twilight had lessened, but it was still clear. She saw at once what had roused him up. Two Kiowas sat their horses on the far slope of the Dancing Bird river, above the holding corrals. Even at two hundred yards, and in failing light, she could not mistake the black and red snakes painted all over Wolf Saddle's body, or the broad black and yellow bands that identified Seth.

Andy's .69 let go with its heavy blast. A buffalo horn vanished from the side of Seth's headdress; he was nine-tenths knocked off his horse, and almost went under its belly, but pulled himself up. Rachel saw him pull off the war bonnet, and slam it down before she turned away.

Andy was pouring a second full measure of gunpowder down the buffalo gun. "Oh, damn! That was Seth! Seth!"

He had missed a chance to take half the hell-fire out of the hostiles, and maybe lift the siege altogether with a single shot. Rachel judged he would have to be straightened out, if they were to be here long.

"Had to shoot at his head, didn't you?" she snapped. "And yanked on the trigger, too—fit to bust it off! Why do you——"

"She kicked high on me," Andy stuttered, almost in tears. "Honest, I centred square on his belly-button. What-all powder did Ben have in this thing—a gallon?" He banged home the rammer, and fitted a cap.

"Put that thing down. That's her last charge, you've got in her now."

"That's Seth sitting out there—will you hear me? And Wolf Saddle with him——"

"Well, they're not sitting out there any more." Low-toned, unhurried, she went on to take him apart, then put him back together again. "What was all that scrabbling around? You looked something like a man trying to wash a cat. You know better than that.

"Now get your dang head up, by God! Because we've wasted the last shot we're going to. There's not a man in Texas shoots any better than you do—or handles anything else any better either. So take your time. There's a power of Kiowas out there, now, but come morning, they're going to be mighty few. And you'll be sitting with pancakes and honey to your frymeat. Because that's what I'm going to fix."

Andy lowered the hammer of the big .69 to half-cock, and stood rubbing his shoulder. When he finally managed a grin, she knew he was all right.

And now the Kiowas came, without gunfire, without war cries, without any sound heard within at all, until fifty-pound boulders crashed against both shutters at once, splitting the timbers, and loosening the frames. Others followed, and the same again, over and over, shattering the heavy wood.

After the fourth attack, not much was left of the battle shutters. Andy had split up the table to brace what busted pieces the first and second assaults had left hanging, but now only some long splinters remained.

For a while they had very easily defended the opened window holes from the opposite wall. The moon was up, and Seth was running out of warriors interested in silhouetting themselves for close-range guns within. Three had been hit there, but the only Kiowa surely killed was one who was shot in the throat and fell inside.

In the fourth assault the Kiowas used more gunfire, and used it better than in any previous attempt. As it lifted, one quick rush was made, in files from both ends of the house. War hatchets struck the splinters away, and a leg came over the east sill. Andy all but severed it with a swing of the axe, and then stepped out from the wall to fire three times into a muddle of shadows at the other embrasure. The Kiowas broke off.

"Never, never in all my life," Rachel said, "did I hear of 'em hanging on like this. Not even for revenge—they're satisfied to take any old scalp, anywhere, for that. Oh, Andy, what's happening here?"

Andy wouldn't admit he saw anything special about it. "We don't hit 'em as square as we hope," he said. "I'm only sure we killed about one. Maybe two. I don't know."

"I could have stopped this, once," Rachel said, and Andy had never heard a like bitterness in her tone. "I know what I'm called. I'm a red squaw. Cash should have let me go."

"That was nothing but Abe Kelsey's damn lie. You're Rachel Zachary, and don't you forget it!"

I am Rachel Zachary. I said that once. Long ago. The day the world fell down.

"Seth believes it," Rachel said. "They all believe it."

Suddenly he turned angry. "You're not an Indian, so quit fooling around with the notion you might be."

But I am. If I'd been raised among 'em, I'd be one of Wolf Saddles's squaws. And I may be yet—until the first time I lay holt of a knife.

Suddenly a hard twist of disgust sickened her, for she realized that a knife in someone's belly was exactly what an Indian would think of, as easily as he breathed.

Andy made his round of the lookouts and came back to her. He spoke softly, from close by: "I didn't go to sound so mean, and cross. It isn't you I'm mad at, Rachel. Ever."

The gentleness of his tone betrayed her, and she let herself slump at the foot of the wall. He sat down close beside her. Awkwardly, but without self-consciousness, he took her in his arms, her head in the hollow of his shoulder, his cheek against her hair.

He said: "You're the best sister anybody ever had. You're more than that. You're all the family I've got left, for all I know." They had no reason to think anything had happened to Ben; but apparently, in his exhaustion, Andy was willing to concede that Ben was lost to them too. But—"We'll fight 'em to a standstill," he said doggedly. "For ever, if they want. Just you and me."

He made her cry, at last. She wept grudgingly, without sound, holding on to him tightly; and presently she knew that he was crying a little too.

No way out, she was thinking. *No way out, ever. No matter what happens now.*

Then the Kiowas came again, in the weirdest way yet.

This time they came fast, and from not far out, in a thundering storm, and the war cries clamoured as never before. A few guns fired wild through the empty windows, without object

MY BROTHER Charlie

It was an unfortunate habit of Charlie's that he often got himself into ridiculous situations. Near our home in Eastbourne was an orchard, surrounded by iron railings, where I often stole apples. Charlie came with me, but as he was rather a fat little boy and could not run very fast I made him stand by the railings to warn me if anyone approached.

On one occasion he failed to notice the farmer bearing down on us. I had to disappear very quickly, and Charlie tried to squeeze through the railings to save himself a long run. Of course, he got firmly stuck. He was there for nearly an hour until the police were called to free him, but although it was very painful he joked with his rescuers most of the time.

He had a wonderful sense of humour and in the end the police decided that he had been punished enough and let him go. They did not even bother to take the apples from his pocket.

Charlie loved little girls—especially little girls with big bows in their hair. He noticed a pretty girl who lived near us, and despite the fact that it made him late for school, he began following her all the way to her school each morning.

Things started to get serious when Charlie took whole days off just to wait for the girl to come out of school. Eventually he was hauled before the school attendance officer, who was a woman, but he was so plausible that she fell for his excuses.

Next day, waiting for his young girl friend, he saw her approaching with her mother. Even Charlie was stumped for words when he found out that she was the daughter of the school attendance officer, to whom he had so glibly given different reasons for his absences.

He spent his leisure time entering amateur talent competitions. He made a bad start at his first appearance, for his supposedly serious act turned out to be hilariously funny. Next time, in a competition staged near Eastbourne, he was determined that nobody should laugh at him, and he chose to sing a touching little song entitled "Queen Of My Heart." No one laughed—in fact, all the old ladies in the audience were crying.

When I looked at the stage I saw that even Charlie was crying, too. Although he won that competition I think he decided that making people laugh is much more fun.

WHO IS THIS FAMOUS BROTHER? See page 37

SOLITUDE—4

Solitude is a good school, but the world is the best theatre.

Jeremy Taylor

CRUNCHIE
makes exciting biting!

4D

ANOTHER FRY FAVOURITE

My mother says I make a ridiculous fuss about my tennis shoes but you can't turn up looking just *anyhow* when you're playing and my shoes look *incredibly* white when I've done them with that Meltonian stuff. I mean it almost looks as though I play tennis well. And it's so easy to put on with that gimmick on the end of the tube if you use the thick kind. (And *all* you do is just sponge it on if you use the Sports White kind.)

M4

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other than added noise. Rachel and Andy stood with their backs against the forward wall, watching for any part of a Kiowa to show inside; but no dismounted warriors came.

Instead a heavy bump shook the very walls and the door strained inward; clods and plaster fell, loosened by the yielding anchorage of the frame. A Kiowa rider was backing his horse against the door. It would go, in a couple of seconds, driven by a thousand pounds of bone and muscle.

Andy got there, cocking the Walker. The bulging planks sprung a sudden three inches, spoiling his first shot, but the Walker slammed again, and the door snapped straight. The Kiowa horseman was on the stoop, and would stay there until picked up.

The attack on the door made plain the whole secret of their precarious defence. They could keep only two guns going—but there were only two ways in. Seth must know that now; he had tried to make another way. But this kind of an attempt on the massive door was almost certain death, with the loopholes placed as they were. All this racket had to have some other object than the backing in of one horse as a ram; for, although the Kiowas had given up on the door, their yelling riders still circled the house.

A new hoof-rumble began on the roof itself; boards cracked in spite of the depth of sod on top, and showers of dirt fell. All this was bewildering, but without visible sense.

Rachel did not know what snatched her attention to the back wall. Surely she could have heard nothing more; and, when she tried to peer into the shadows, the small, indirect light of the moon was not enough to tell her what she saw.

She went to the root-cellar slide and bent low. A split had appeared in the boards of the slide. As she watched, the blade of a hatchet struck through and was wrenched back. She pulled the .36 revolver Andy had made her wear, and fired wildly three times through the slide as the hatchet struck again. The hatchet blade stayed where it was, stuck halfway through into the room.

Andy was trying to shout something to her, but she couldn't tell what it was. She got down on the floor, which might have been what he wanted her to do. She dared not leave the slide, yet to stay by it left Andy with the defence of both windows in front, and a weakened door that would probably go down now before any kind of a ram.

A touch of panic came to her. The Kiowas were at last finding more ways in than the two of them could defend. She saw Andy fire through a wall port, and she started to him with some unclear notion of shuttling between the front and back walls.

She didn't get there. Halfway across the room she was struck and borne down by a great mass of dirt, sod and broken boards from the roof as it gave way. Her face hit the floor hard, and she lay stunned, unaware of where she was or what had happened to her, until Andy pulled her free.

She sat against the wall where he put her, strangled by the dust, and blood was running down her front from her nose and cut mouth. But, as her head cleared, she saw what had happened. A horse had broken through the roof with one hind foot, and was trapped there. The hoof dangled loosely from a broken cannon, yet tried to kick.

One more way in? It might be, if the enemy could pull the horse clear. Or the struggles of the horse might do it; dirt was still falling, and the hole in the roof enlarging.

Andy was watching the front again as Rachel got up shakily. The holster of the Whitney dragged at her belt, and she found it filled with dirt. She drew, emptied the holster, and tried to clean the weapon of its grit.

The rocketing horsemen thinned; a horse plunged downward past a window as its rider jumped it off the front of the roof; and once more the Kiowas broke off. There were diminishing hoof mutterings for a while and then quiet.

The defenders were left confused. The two tries at the door and through the root cellar had been good ones, and had threatened to finish them, yet seemed feebly carried out, without tenacity.

Actually, the pull-away had not been ordered. The warriors had drawn off of their own accord, because their horses were blowing. Such failures in following through were always putting a stumble into the tactics of the undisciplined Horse Tribes.

But some part of the thing that all the uproar had been meant to cover was still going on.

Andy took the buffalo gun, and for some moments studied the position of the struggling horse, which was still working deeper into the room through the roof. He had to bend backward, awkwardly braced, to fire upward, but the double charge of the .69 took effect through boards, through turf, and through horseflesh. The great thrashing up there stopped as the bullet found the heart.

Andy was turning away when one more shot came in. He squealed from a suddenly tight-shut throat, and went down. He pivoted as he fell, and came down partly on his side and partly on his face, arms and legs jack-knifing in the stunned moment between the first shock of pain and its return in full force.

"I'm all right—I'm all right——" he said, without seeming to know how to help himself.

For an instant Rachel could not see where he had been hurt, but a rush of blood was already puddling into the patch of moonlight two feet away. It was the inside of his upper arm, just below the shoulder, and the back muscle of his arm. The tumbling bullet had torn a jagged channel, so deep that his arm seemed half severed. An artery was cut, and the bone broken, so that when she straightened the arm it had a joint where none should be.

She tore off the hem of her skirt and made a tourniquet. It had to go almost at the armpit, the wound was so high up. Nothing was in reach for a turnstick except the barrel of the Whitney revolver, so she used that. She twisted the heavy cord of cloth tighter, and tighter, and still the blood ran in a pulsing stream.

Pain was returning, making muscles jerk all over Andy's body. "Don't—don't—" he kept saying through his teeth, while still the pistol must be turned, and turned, and the tourniquet disappeared into his flesh.

When the rush of blood dwindled to a trickle, Rachel tied the Whitney where it was, and fetched the pillow from her bed. Ripped open, this yielded masses of raw cotton in lumpy wads, as it had come from the bale. Andy choked back a scream, then went unconscious as she turned him on his face to get at the wound.

It took bandage after bandage, for in spite of great handfuls of cotton the blood kept coming through. After the bandaging she had to make splints, and by the time that was done he was able to help her get him to his feet. She half carried him, taking his whole weight when he lurched, and got him on to his bunk. He was breathing hard but he cried out no more.

"Walker—th' Walker Colt," he gasped. "Bring me. . . ." Rachel put the gun into his right hand. Then she got the Henry carbine, and sat on the floor beside Andy's bunk.

She could hear the Kiowas singing again, some place a good way off, not so loudly this time. They were using a single drum, muffled by wetting its stretched hide. She couldn't tell how many voices there were. She tried to estimate the time by the position of the squares of moonlight on the floor. Midnight was hardly past; the dawn had a long, long, way to come.

A soft, dragging sound was coming from somewhere. It sounded as if it were here, near her, in this room, yet she could see nothing move. After she had listened a while she put her ear to the planking. The sound was coming from under the floor.

There was a space under the joists at this end of the room. You could squeeze into it from the root cellar; Rachel and Andy had explored it long ago. That was where something was dragging itself around, either stealthily, or else feebly and with great difficulty.

And now Rachel remembered the shots she had fired through the root cellar slide, when an enemy was trying to chop his way in. Maybe one of the shots had creased him, or skulled him so that he had come to in the dark, not knowing where he was. Maybe the savage dragging himself around under the floor was blind—or even without any mind at all—just a body that lived and crawled, not knowing what it did.

The big carved secretary lifted two inches and dropped again, with a bump that shook the whole floor. One end of the heavy walnut piece was standing on the Glory Hole, and the trap door had tried to open. Whoever was under the floor was not mindless; not feeble, or weakened, either—he must have the strength of a grizzly. Under the floor was no wounded man, crawling around blind, but a stalking hunter carrying out a plan.

As quietly as she could Rachel hitched herself back into the corner by Andy's bunk, where the deepest shadows were. She cocked the carbine and held it in her lap, ready to fire it from there.

The carved secretary began to quiver. Slowly, slowly, a fraction of an inch at a time, the trap door of the Glory Hole began to rise. . . .

THE sun was going down as Ben came in sight of home, approaching from the south across the Dancing Bird.

From a long way out, as he crossed a far rise, he saw that the chimney showed no least haze of smoke beyond the bare trees; and suddenly he knew that something was very wrong.

He stopped a moment, then threw away the mule's lead, pulled his carbine from his boot, and went on at as hard a run as his horse had left. Behind the last ridge he stepped down, dropping the reins, and ran forward to the crest on foot. There he stood for many minutes, looking at the homestead from across the Dancing Bird, at two hundred and fifty yards.

The door still stood, but the windows were black, empty holes, shutterless, with only a few splinters of framing where the glass had been. A misshapen dead horse, bloating in the summer heat, lay on the roof. The red, horizontal light of the sunset struck across the house front, bringing out sharply some hundreds of pock holes, where bullets had blasted cone-shaped craters, as big as a man's hand, out of the dry mud. The door of the saddle shed was torn out.

That was about all there was to see. But the empty corrals left this place more still than it had ever been, since first anyone came here. No place had ever looked more dead.

He reached the creek bed, dropped into it, waded the mucky shallows to climb the cutbank, then walked steadily uphill to the house. He was within ten yards when a strange, unnatural sound from inside made him falter. What he heard, he knew as he came nearer, was someone moaning and muttering some sort of gibberish. It sounded as much like Kiowa as anything else.

He drew his long-barrelled Colt, and stepped over a window sill; and there he stopped.

He was standing in a shambles. The

WHY?

IN an evening newspaper, Brown saw an advertisement for a second-hand motor car, which he decided to buy. The vendor was a private motorist named Gordon, and the price was £400.

The car was in good working order, and for the next five months Brown used it regularly. Then two detectives called and told him that the car was stolen property. It had been taken from its true owner by the person from whom Gordon had bought it.

Brown had to return the car to its rightful owner.

He then sued Gordon for the return of his £400. The case was heard at the local county court. Gordon swore that he had not known the car was stolen, either at the time he had bought it or when he had sold it. Brown's lawyer conceded Gordon's good faith, but contended that he should still re-pay Brown the whole £400 purchase price.

Gordon's counsel argued that he was entitled to deduct a reasonable sum for the five months that the car had been in Brown's possession. His client, who had already lost every penny he had innocently paid the thief, should at least have some payment for the use that Brown had had out of the car.

But the judge ordered Gordon to pay the whole £400 back to Brown.

WHY? *A barrister explains the judge's ruling on page 38.*

MY BROTHER CHARLIE

See page 35

Charlie Chester, the comedian, is the famous brother of Mr. George Manser

carved secretary was lying on its face, the only whole piece of furniture in the room. Broken glass and a great litter of shattered wood was everywhere. Three walls, but especially the back wall, were covered with the same bullet craters that pocked the front wall outside.

A leg of a dead horse swung down in the middle of the room from a great sag in the broken roof. The clock was bullet-smashed, the water barrel split and overturned. No greater havoc could have been expected if a regiment had fought there for a week.

The voice that was talking gibberish was Andy's. He lay half out of his bunk in a fever delirium. He was begging for water. He moved feebly and aimlessly in a kind of writhing, and his eyes saw nothing.

Rachel stood in the shadows at the far end of the room, a carbine in her hands, and she looked so like a spook that Ben hardly recognized her. Her eyes stared at him like dead eyes, out of black hollows.

He failed to speak, on his first effort. On the second try he said: "It's over, Rachel. Now everything's going to be all right."

She stood the carbine on its butt, out in the middle of the floor, as if she were leaning it against an invisible wall. It balanced a moment, then rattled on the planks as she turned away. She stumbled to the bedroom door, and got it open. She almost reached the bed, but struck its edge as she fell and lay face downwards on the floor.

Ben picked her up and started to put her on her bed; but he saw the sheeted corpse in the other bed, so carried her away. He found his own bunk smoothly made, untouched in all that chaos. He stripped off the ruins of Rachel's dress and put her poor dirty little body between the clean sheets before he went to Andy.

NINE of the range crew came in soon after daylight. They thought they had had a pretty bad time until they saw what had happened here. And nobody knew where Cash was.

They moved both Andy and Rachel to improvised beds in the saddle shed, and strapped Andy down to dress the wreckage of his arm. Ben himself bathed Rachel and made her as comfortable as he could.

Sometimes, for a few moments, she came half awake; she knew Ben then, but said very little. For the present she didn't seem to remember much more, and Ben was glad for that. He poured soup into her when he could, and she slept. . . .

Late in the morning, shortly after they buried Matthilda, a rider from the Rawlinses brought word that Cash had been found, and that he was dead.

They learned nothing else until Georgia Rawlins rode in at noon. She said sombrely: "I'm glad to see *you* here, Ben." Her face looked bloodless under her tan, and very drawn; somehow harder, around the mouth and eyes. She made Ben walk out to the creek with her, where they could talk. "I sent a man. Did he get here? We found Cash."

He nodded.

She went on in a lifeless monotone. After Cash rode her home or pretty near, he seemingly had lined out to fetch his crew in. But after the Kiowas cut him off, she believed, he must have tried to fight his way home.

The sign appeared to show that he had fought a long way from where he was hit, and his horse killed, to where he had ended. Georgia herself had gone out to identify him for certain. She had sewed him into a wagon sheet, and they had buried him on the hillside above the place where he fell.

"Ben, can it be that only the day before yesterday he was alive?" Her face crinkled up, and the tears came. "I loved him, Ben. I was going to marry him, soon as we could tell you. It was always him, I guess. It can't ever be no other man."

She leaned against him, and her tears wetted his shirt. Her words came muffled. "You're the better man. You're a better man than Cash ever could have been. But somehow nothing

"Now admit it—aren't they a lot cooler?"

like that seemed to matter." She stood back, and dried her tears. "You want me to look at Andy's arm?"

They walked back to the saddle shed. Ben had sent a rider to bring a surgeon from Fort Richardson, but he might have to go all the way to Fort Worth. Might be days. If he didn't get here in time, Ben would have to take off the arm himself, or they'd lose Andy next.

"Will you help me, Georgia?" he asked.

"I'll help you all I can. Always."

The swarm of hands cleaning up the house found two corpses still hidden in it. Wolf Saddle was dead in the root cellar; and Seth, shot through one eye, was in the Glory Hole.

That the two war leaders had died trying to come to close quarters was no coincidence. They were the ones with no way to let go. Doubtless they would have chosen this, rather than a return to the Kiowas in defeat and dishonour.

With more hands at work than there was room for, the house turned new again overnight. The roof was mended, the floors scrubbed and sandstoned; new battle shutters were built. A new smooth-over of plaster dried overnight and was whitewashed the next day. The place looked kind of bare, but they moved Andy and Rachel into the lower bunks of the main room. And still Rachel slept.

Now other people began to come; they were going to keep on coming for days, as the story spread, all of them eager to help in any way that could be found. Not one of them could remember having called the Zacharys Indian-lovers, or ever questioning for one moment the origins of the girl Old Zack had found upon the prairie, seventeen years ago. Only Zeb Rawlins, when at last he came, would recall his errors, every one, and own to them as forthrightly as he had stood against them.

For while Andy would become a hero, Rachel was going to be idolized. She could have anything in Texas; she could have Texas; though Ben didn't believe she would want it any more.

Up until the third day after the fight, the cowhands were able to keep people out of the house. Andy was resting easier, and Rachel was asleep; Ben sat on a box near the hearth, keeping an eye on them. He didn't want to see anybody else.

A cowhand named Roddy came up and hung around near the stoop, balancing on one leg and then the other, bashfully trying to see in; he didn't want to disturb anybody by knocking. Ben went out to him.

"Indians lanced a caow last night," Roddy said. "Just out of pyore meanness. Never took no part of her. Then they taken the lance and stuck it straight up in her ribs, plain to be seen. Right close here, too. It's getting so they not only jump you, and steal you blind, and murder the hell out of you. Next they got to come back and taunt you."

"What colour was it?" Ben asked Roddy.

"Oh, I'd call it a kind of yalla caow."

"No, damn it—the lance!"

"Oh, I'd call it black, mainly, with a lot of rawhide wrop——"

"Good God Almighty! Where is it now?"

"Well, last I saw, the boys was horsing around. . . ."

Ben got the lance and took it into the house. Its needle-tapered ironwood, from a perfect shoot of the incredibly hard Osage orange, was stained black and polished to ebony, except for two feet at the tip, which was painted red.

The hand-hold, placed slightly towards the butt from the balance, was wound with whang, aged iron hard, and worn to a black shine of its own by half a century of use. But six inches of similar winding at the butt did not belong there. Grease and charcoal had been rubbed into the rawhide string to make it less conspicuous, yet it was new. Ben began to suspect what he had here, when he saw that.

He unwound the whang, and found it had secured a parchment-like tube of doeskin, which he was able to slide off the butt of the lance. A strange, creepy excitement of imminent discovery stirred his scalp; for he knew now and for sure what this was. Turning the tube in his hands, he read the message-picture on the outside, skilfully draughted in delicate, even lines.

An Indian, conventionally represented as having feathers sticking straight up out of his head, was handing something to a white man, identified by a stovepipe hat. A wavy line from the Indian's head led to a small drawing of a horse striking with its forefeet, and a similar line led from the high hat to something like a gourd. *Striking Horse gives Stone Hand a present.* Couldn't have been any plainer.

He stood up for a look at Andy and Rachel, in the lower bunks at the end of the room. Andy was restless in a fever doze, but Rachel was sleeping quietly. Ben let his eyes rest on her for half a minute before he pried the tube partly open with his thumbnail.

The doeskin had been scraped very thin, but nothing had been done to keep it soft. He supposed the drawings had been made while it was still green, for now it had hardened in the shape of the ironwood butt, and wanted to stay that way.

He had a glimpse of something that might have been the forequarters of a horse, and the speckled face by which the Kiowas indicated 1857, the year of the spotted death, when Old Zach had found a lost baby on the prairie.

So here was one more incomprehensible paradox of Kiowa integrity. Cash had made his brash visit to Striking Horse at a time when the Dancing Bird was being closely and almost continuously scouted, as the sign had plainly shown. A raid in strength must already have been under debate. When Cash asked the old Indian what child, captive or Kiowa, had been lost by Kiowas in the year of the spotted death, he had as good as told Striking Horse outright where that child was now. Ben did not doubt that Striking Horse had used that intelligence, without hesitation and at once, to unleash Seth's murderous assault.

But at the same time Striking Horse had promised Cash to send him the answer he wanted, if he could find it out. And now he had sent it because he had said he would. Only an Indian would see no contradictions in sending destruction and the fulfilment of a promise almost hand in hand. And Striking Horse's answer would be the truth, for, if he had not learned it, he would have sent nothing at all.

This thing in Ben's hand held the secret of Rachel's birth.

Shakily he pried at the brittle parchment; then stopped abruptly. Some kind of warning had sounded inside his head. He sat down on a box by the hearth, the tube dangling from his fingers, and his eyes brooding upon the ash-banked coals; and he felt suddenly ashamed.

He knew why he had drawn back from prying out the secret of the doeskin scroll. If Rachel could not look to him for understanding, she could not hope to find it on this earth. *Yet I was fixing to ask one mean-minded question more,* he thought, *that I don't give a hoot about, one way or the other. She'd quit me, she ought to quit me, if she knew it even entered my mind.*

He leaned down and shoved the parchment into the heart of the banked coals. A little shaving of flame had come alive at one end of it before he turned away. He went and stood beside Rachel, looking down at her sombrely as she slept; and he had never felt more humble in his life.

God help me to make it up to you. For without you I don't know how to go on.

Behind him on the hearth the doeskin uncurled, flattening in the heat, so that the fine-lined drawings upon its inner surface were lighted by the flames.

Nearest the speckled face that meant 1857, Striking Horse had outlined a running pony. The pony's tail was clubbed, showing it to be a war pony recently in action. Two trailing lines were the poles of a drag-litter; and behind this a small figure represented a child. A hoop over the head, from shoulder to shoulder, was the sign for a cradle-board; and a triangle placed as a skirt showed the child was female. From the head a wavering line led to the key symbol—a stovepipe hat.

The child we lost was white, the picture-writing said.

For a few moments the warping scroll showed Striking Horse's message to the room. Then the fire took it, and the parchment writhed, turning to flame. Only a crinkled black twist remained when Ben turned back to knock it into dust.

THE END

WHY?

See page 37

BECAUSE, said the judge, when Brown paid over his £400 he thought that he was buying a car, not just the use of one for five months. Since he had not got what he paid for, the law entitled him to have full repayment.

(This is the probable verdict, based on actual cases.)

Who's next for the RIVIERA?

READERS from Carshalton, Bucksburn, Liverpool, London, Stockport, Newark, Worthing, East Boldon, Scarborough, Reading, Bognor Regis, Northampton, Streatham and Bristol have all been Bullets holiday guests beside the Mediterranean.

Enter this week's best Bullet on your coupon below and *you* can be next for the Riviera. You choose *when* and *where* for a £75 holiday for two—up to 10 days at Monte Carlo or Menton to celebrate your First Prize cheque. And all for having fun with words!

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Here's how to shape a Bullet. First, grasp the broad idea by enjoying the latest winners. Then choose as your starting-point any Example from list below. To it, add TWO, THREE or FOUR words to make the whole into a bright Bullet.

Harold's Battle	The Bookie's Money
To Cut Taxes	Holidays
In The Orchard Of Peace	Wild And Woolly
Poor France	Those Fluorescent Socks
Man Adrift	Hard To Get On
Ernie Ran Amok And	Basking And Bathing
The Churches	Found Guilty
When Hiram Hit London	At The Casino
To Celebrate	Like A Sheepdog
Throb Of The Tomtoms	Round The Mulberry Bush

Last six Examples are incomplete: if you wish to use one, first complete it with a word of your choice—then make your Bullet as above

To.....The World ..... Of Today
Gathering In The..... ..... Abroad
Shows We're Getting..... In A.....Cottage

EXAMPLE ....

BULLET

EX .....

B

EX .....

B

EX .....

B.

EX .....

B.

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£25: G. F. Turner, 21 Boswell Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey: SHOVELLING IT IN—WITH *Teaspoon*, BRITISH PROPAGANDA!

£10: C. Jones, 42 Gleton Avenue, Hove: DOWN ON THE BEACH—PLOP! PLOP! CASTING *Millstones*!

OTHER AWARDS: £9: L. Fowler, 64 Peterborough Road, Farcet, Peterborough: IN NATURE'S CINEMA—MAN'S "LATECOMER"—STUMBLING, SEARCHING—. £8: J. L. Sewell, 182 Waller Road, London, S.E.14: GOOD FOR YOU—LEARNING PAINFULLY WHAT *Isn't*. £7: E. E. Harvey, 17 Oakfield Road, Londonderry: WHAT THE WORLD'S COMING TO—END OF "PRODIGAL'S" ALLOWANCE? £6: Mrs. M. Markham, 37 Wyresdale Crescent, Perivale, Middlesex: TO ESCAPE FROM THE HUMDRUM—LET *Ernie* PICK HONOURS! £5: Mrs. J. W. Hunter, 54 Devonshire Road, Aberdeen: IN THE MELTING-POT—FORCES—NOT SERGEANT'S *Heart*! £5: S. H. Welch, 54 Copthorne Avenue, Bromley, Kent: LET'S GET CRACKING AND—THAT "CHINESE EGG" MEATY! £5: G. M. YATES, 2 Charlcombe Rise, Bath: GLUED TO THE TV—FAMILY—FIDO, "LONE RANGER"!

For ten winners of £2 10s., see *Bullets Bulletin*. 100 "Double Six" Prizes and 1,500 2-in-1 Awards have also been posted. (£40 Presentation as offered won by Mr. C. Jones, Hove.)

RULES 1. First Prize for best Bullet received. Others in order of merit; the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all Bullets received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. at the rate of 6d. per Bullet. Fee submitted will be taken to cover Bullets in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed. Make P.O. payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that result of this Contest (in JOHN BULL dated August 17), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, August 3, for early news of No. 2,099 result.)

POST ENTRY

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Roberts

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METHOD: Place 3 Cod Steaks in a well buttered pan. Season with salt and pepper. Cover and cook over the fire for about 15 minutes. When ready, place the Cod Steaks in a heat-proof dish. *For the Sauce:* To one glass of water add the juice of 1 or 2 lemons, add one chopped onion, one crushed section of garlic, parsley coarsely chopped, a pinch of thyme, four tomatoes peeled and chopped. Mix with one ounce of butter or margarine, a little at a time to a smooth consistency. Pour over the fish. Garnish with gherkins and mushrooms. Sufficient for three persons.

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